Men and manners in America. By the author of Cyril Thornton, etc. Volume 1

MEN AND MANNERS IN AMERICA.

BY THE AUTHOR OF CYRIL THORNTON, ETC.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

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WILLIAM BLACKWOOD, EDINBURGH; AND T. CADELL, STRAND, LONDON.

M.D.CCC.XXXIV.

TO WILLIAM WOLRYCHE WHITMORE, ESQUIRE, M.P.

Dear Whitmore,

I inscribe these volumes to you. As a politician, your course has ever been straightforward and consistent, and I know no one who brings to the discharge of his public duties, a mind

less biassed by prejudice, or more philosophically solicitous for the attainment of truth. Neither mingling in the asperities of party conflict, nor descending to those arts by which temporary popularity is often purchased at the price of VOL. I. *a* II permanent contempt, you have been wisely content to rest your claims to the gratitude of your country, on a zealous, enlightened, and unobtrusive devotion to her best interests.

Were I conscious, in what I have written of the United States, of being influenced by any motive incompatible with perfect fairness of purpose, you are perhaps the last person to whose judgment I should venture an appeal. By no one will the arguments I have advanced be more rigidly examined, and the grist of truth more carefully winnowed from the chaff of sophistry and declamation. For this reason, and in testimony of sincere esteem, I now publicly connect your name with the present work. You will find in it the conclusions of an independent observer; formed after much deliberation, III and offered to the world with that confidence in their justice, which becomes a writer, who, through the medium of the press, pretends to influence the opinions of others.

It was not till more than a year after my return, that I finally determined on publishing the result of my observations in the United States. Of books of travels in America, there seemed no deficiency; and I was naturally unwilling to incur, by the public expression of my opinions, the certainty of giving offence to a people, of whose hospitality I shall always entertain a grateful recollection. I should therefore gladly have remained silent, and devoted those hours which occasionally hang heavy on the hands of an idle gentleman, to the productions of lighter literature, which, if not more IV attractive to the reader, would certainly have been more agreeable to the taste and habits of the writer.

But when I found the institutions and experience of the United States deliberately quoted in the reformed Parliament, as affording safe precedent for British legislation, and learned that the drivellers who uttered such nonsense, instead of encountering merited derision, were listened to with patience and approbation, by men as ignorant as themselves, I

certainly did feel that another work on America was yet wanted, and at once determined to undertake a task which inferior considerations would probably have induced me to decline.

How far, in writing of the institutions of a foreign country, I may have been influenced V by the prejudices natural to an Englishman, I presume not to determine. To the impartiality of a cosmopolite I make no pretension. No man can wholly cast off the trammels of habit and education, nor escape from the bias of that multitude of minute and latent predilections, which insensibly affects the judgment of the wisest.

But apart from such necessary and acknowledged influences, I am aware of no prejudice which could lead me to form a perverted estimate of the condition, moral or social, of the Americans. I visited their country with no antipathies to be overcome; and I doubt not you can bear testimony that my political sentiments were not such, as to make it probable that I should regard with an unfavourable eye VI the popular character of their government. In the United States I was received with kindness, and enjoyed an intercourse at once gratifying and instructive, with many individuals for whom I can never cease to cherish the warmest sentiments of esteem. I neither left England a visionary and discontented enthusiast, nor did I return to it a man of blighted prospects and disappointed hopes. In the business or ambitions of the world I had long ceased to have any share. I was bound to no party, and pledged to no opinions. I had visited many countries, and may therefore be permitted to claim the possession of such advantages as foreign travel can bestow.

Under these circumstances, I leave it to the ingenuity of others to discover by what probable VII —what possible temptation, I could be induced to write in a spirit of unjust depreciation of the manners, morals, or institutions of a people so intimately connected with England, by the ties of interest, and the affinities of common ancestry.

It has been said by some one, that the narrative of a traveller is necessarily a book of inaccuracies. I admit the truth of the apophthegm, and only claim the most favourable construction for his mistakes. The range of a traveller's observations must generally

be limited to those peculiarities which float, as it were, on the surface of society. Of the “sunless treasuries” beneath, he cannot speak. His sources of information are always fallible, and at best he can appeal only to the results of an VIII imperfect experience. A great deal which necessarily enters into his narrative, must be derived from the testimony of others. In the common intercourse of society, men do not select their words with that scrupulous precision which they use in a witness-box. Details are loosely given and inaccurately remembered. Events are coloured or distorted by the partialities of the narrator; minute circumstances are omitted or brought into undue prominence, and the vast and varied machinery by which truth is manufactured into fallacy is continually at work.

From the errors which I fear must still constitute the badge of all our tribe, I pretend to no exemption. But whatever be the amount of its imperfections, the present work is offered to IX the world without excuse of any sort, for I confess my observations have led to the conclusion, that a book requiring apology is rarely worth it.

Ever, Dear Whitmore, Very truly yours, T. H amilton

Rydal, 8 *th July* , 1833.

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MEN AND MANNERS IN AMERICA.

CHAPTER I. VOYAGE—NEW YORK.

On the morning of the 16th of October, I embarked at Liverpool, on board of the American packet ship, New York, Captain Bennet, bound for the port of the same name. There were twenty-six passengers, and though the accommodations were excellent, the cabin, as might be expected, was disagreeably crowded. Our party consisted of about fifteen or sixteen Americans, some half-dozen countrymen of my own, two or three English, a Swiss, and a Frenchman.

Though the elements of this assemblage were heterogeneous VOL. I A 2 enough, I have great pleasure in remembering that the most perfect harmony prevailed on board. To myself, the whole of my fellow-passengers were most obliging; and for some I contracted a regard, which led me to regret that the period of our arrival in port, was likely to bring with it a lasting cessation of our intercourse.

The miseries of a landsman on ship-board, have afforded frequent matter for pen and pencil. At *best* , a sea voyage is a confinement at once irksome and odious, in which the unfortunate prisoner is compelled for weeks, or months, to breathe the tainted atmosphere of a close and crowded cabin, and to sleep at night in a sort of box, about the size of a coffin for “the stout gentleman.” At *worst* , it involves a complication of the most nauseous evils that can afflict humanity,—an utter prostration of power, both bodily and mental, —a revulsion of the whole corporeal machinery, accompanied by a host of detestable diagnostics, which at once convert a well-dressed and well-favoured gentleman, into an object of contempt to himself, and disgust to those around him.

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Such are a few of the joys that await a landsman, whom evil stars have led to “go down to the sea in ships, and occupy his business in the great waters.” With regard to sailors, the case is different, but not much. Being seasoned vessels, they are, no doubt, exempt from some of those evils, and completely hardened to others, which are most revolting to a landsman. But their Pandora's box can afford to lose a few miseries, and still retain a sufficient stock for any reasonable supply. It may be doubted, too, whether the most ardent sailor was ever so hallucinated by professional enthusiasm, as to pitch his Paradise—wherever he might place his Purgatory—afloat.

On board of the New York, however, I must say, that our sufferings were exclusively those proceeding from the elements of air and water. Her accommodations were excellent. Nothing had been neglected which could possibly contribute to the comfort of the passengers. In another respect, too, we were fortunate. Our commander had nothing about him, of “the rude and boisterous captain of the sea.” In truth, Captain Bennet was not only an adept in all professional accomplishment, but, in other respects, 4 a person of extensive information; and I confess, it was even with some degree of pride, that I learned he had received his nautical education in the British navy. Partaking of the strong sense we all entertained, of his unvarying solicitude for the comfort of his passengers, I am

happy also to acknowledge myself indebted to him for much valuable information relative to the country I was about to visit.

Among the passengers were some whose eccentricities contributed materially to enliven the monotony of the voyage. The most prominent of these was a retired hair-dresser from Birmingham, innocent of all knowledge unconnected with the wig-block, who, having recently married a young wife, was proceeding, accompanied by his fair rib, with the romantic intention of establishing themselves in “some pretty box,” in the back-woods of America. As for the lady, she was good-looking, but, being somewhat gratuitously solicitous to barb the arrows of her charms, her chief occupation during the voyage, consisted in adorning her countenance with such variety of wigs of different colours, as unquestionably did excite the marvel, if not the admiration, of the passengers. The 5 billing and cooing of this interesting couple, however, though sanctioned by the laws of Hymen, became at length so public and obtrusive, as, in the opinion of the ladies, to demand repression; and a request was consequently made, that they would be so obliging for the future, as to reserve their mutual demonstrations of attachment, for the privacy of their own cabin.

Among the passengers too, was Master Burke, better known by the title of the Irish Roscius, who was about to cross the Atlantic with his father and a French music-master, to display his talents on a new field. Though not much given to admire those youthful prodigies, who, for a season or two, are puffed into notice, and then quietly lapse into very ordinary men, I think there can be no question that young Burke is a very wonderful boy. Barely eleven years old, he was already an accomplished musician, played the violin with first-rate taste and execution, and in his impersonations of character, displayed a versatility of power, and a perception of the deeper springs of human action, almost incredible in one so young. But independently of all this, he became, by his amiable and obliging disposition, an universal favourite on 6 board; and when the conclusion of our voyage brought with it a general separation, I am certain the boy carried with him the best wishes

of us all, that he might escape injury or contamination in that perilous profession, to which his talents had been thus early devoted.

We sailed from Liverpool about one o'clock, and in little more than an hour, were clear of the Mersey. On the morning following we were opposite the Tuskar rocks, and a run of two days brought us fairly out into the Atlantic. Then bidding farewell to the bold headlands of the Irish coast, with a flowing sheet we plunged forward into the vast wilderness of waters, which lay foaming before us.

For the first week, all the chances were in our favour. The wind, though generally light, was fair, and the New York—celebrated as a fast sailer—with all canvass set, ran down the distance gallantly. But, on the seventh day, our good fortune was at an end. The wind came on boisterous and adverse, and our progress for the next fortnight was comparatively small. Many of the party became affected with sea-sickness, and the hopes, to which our early good fortune 7 had given rise, of a rapid passage, were—as other dearer hopes have been by us all—slowly, but unwillingly, relinquished.

We were yet some five hundred miles to the eastward of the banks of Newfoundland, when, on the 23d day, our spirits were again gladdened by a fair wind. In the six following days we ran down fifteen hundred miles, and the evening of the 28th day, found us off Sandy Hook, which forms the entrance to the Bay of New York.

Our misfortunes, however, were not yet at an end. When within a few hours' sail of port, our progress was arrested for four days, by a dense fog. Four more disagreeable days, I never passed. Sun, moon, stars, earth, and ocean, lay hid in impenetrable vapour, and it was only by the constant use of the lead, that the ship could move in safety. The air we breathed appeared changed into a heavier element; we felt like men suddenly smitten with blindness, and it almost seemed as if the time of chaos had come again, when darkness lay brooding on the face of the deep. The effect of this weather on the spirits of us all, was very remarkable. Even the most jovial of 8 the party became gloomy and morose.

Conversation languished, and the benevolence with which we had hitherto regarded each other, was evidently diminished.

At length, when our patience, hourly sinking, had nearly reached zero, a favourable change took place. About noon on the 17th of November, the mist suddenly rolled upward like a curtain, and with joyful eyes we beheld the coast of New Jersey outstretched before us. Towards evening, we received a pilot, and were visited by several boats employed by the proprietors of newspapers, to procure the earliest intelligence from vessels in the offing. The avidity for news of all kinds, displayed both by these visitors and the American passengers, was rather amusing.

Numerous questions were interchanged on matters of mercantile, political, or domestic interest. Though in this sort of traffic, as in all others, there was value given on both sides, yet it struck me, that a sincere desire to oblige was generally apparent. Every one seemed happy to enter on the most prolix details for the gratification of his neighbour; and the frequent repetition of a question, appeared by no means to be 9 attended with the usual consequences on the patience of the person addressed. I certainly could detect nothing of that dogged, and almost sullen brevity, with which, I imagine, the communications of Englishmen, in similar circumstances, would have been marked. No one appeared to grudge the trouble necessary to convey a complete comprehension of facts or opinions to the mind of his neighbour, nor to circumscribe his communications, within the limits necessary to secure the gratification of his own curiosity.

We passed Sandy Hook in the night, and, on coming on deck in the morning, were greeted with one of the most beautiful prospects I had ever beheld. We were then passing the Narrows; Long Island on one side, Staten Island on the other, a finely undulating country, hills covered with wood, agreeably interspersed with villas and cottages, and New York on its island, with its vast forest of shipping, looming in the distance.

Such are some of the more prominent features of the scene, by which our eyes were first gladdened, on entering the American waters. A more glorious morning never shone from the heavens. All around 10 was bathed in a flood of sunshine, which seemed brighter when contrasted with the weather under which we had so recently suffered.

I am not aware that there is any thing very fine in the appearance of New York, when seen from the bay, but, taken in conjunction with the surrounding scenery, it certainly forms a pleasing feature in the landscape. The city stands on the southern extremity of York Island, and enlarging in latitude as it recedes from the apex of a triangle, stretches along the shores of the Hudson and East Rivers, far as the eye can reach. On the right are the heights of Brooklyn, which form part of Long Island; and across the broad waters of the Hudson, the view is terminated on the left by the wooded shore of New Jersey.

But whatever may be the pictorial defects or beauties of New York, it is almost impossible to conceive a city better situated for commerce. At no season of the year, can there be any obstruction in its communication with the ocean; and with a fine and navigable river, stretching for nearly two hundred miles into the interior of a fertile country, it possesses 11 natural advantages of no common order. In extent of trade and population, I believe New York already exceeds every other city of the Union; and unquestionably it is yet very far from having gathered all its greatness.

The scene, as we approached the quay, became gradually more animated. Numerous steam-vessels, and boats of all descriptions, were traversing the harbour; and the creaking of machinery, and the loud voices which occasionally reached us from the shore, gave evidence of activity and bustle. About twelve o'clock the ship reached her mooring, and in half an hour I was safely housed in Bunker's Hotel, where I had been strongly recommended to take up my residence. A young American accompanied me to the house, and introduced me to the landlord, who, after some miscellaneous conversation, produced a book, in which I was directed to enrol my name, country, and vocation. This formality being complied with, a black waiter was directed to convey such of my baggage as I had

been permitted to bring ashore, to an apartment, and I found myself at liberty 12 to ramble forth, and gratify my curiosity by a view of the town.

In visiting a foreign city, a traveller—especially an English one—usually expects to find, in the aspect of the place and its inhabitants, some tincture of the barbaric. There is something of this, though not a great deal, at New York. The appearance of the population, though not English, is undoubtedly nearer to it than that of any city on the continent of Europe; and but for the number of blacks and people of colour one encounters in the streets, there is certainly little to remind a traveller that the breadth of an ocean divides him from Great Britain. The fashions of dress generally adopted by the wealthier classes are those of Paris and London; and the tastes and habits of the people, so far as these appear on the surface, bear a strong resemblance to those prevalent in the old country. Minute differences, however, are no doubt apparent at the first glance. The aspect and bearing of the citizens of New York, are certainly very distinguishable from any thing ever seen in England. They are generally slender in person, 13 somewhat slouching in gait, and without that openness of countenance and erectness of deportment to which an English eye has been accustomed. Their utterance, too, is marked by a peculiar modulation, partaking of a snivel and a drawl, which, I confess, to my ear, is by no means laudable on the score of euphony.

Observations of a similar character, are as applicable to the city, as to its inhabitants. The frequent intermixture of houses of brick and framework, was certainly unlike any thing I had ever seen in Europe; and the New-Yorkers have inherited from their Dutch ancestors the fashion of painting their houses of a bright colour, which produces an agreeable effect, and gives to the streets an air of gaiety and lightness which could not otherwise have been attained. The prominent defect of the city, is a want of consistency and compactness, in the structure even of the better streets. There are some excellent houses in all, but these frequently occur in alternation with mere hovels, and collections of rubbish, which detract materially from the general effect. But the appearance of New York is unquestionably pleasing. It is full, even to 14 overflow, of business and bustle, and

crowded with a population devoting their whole energies to the arts of money-getting. Such were the first impressions I received in New York.

Having gratified my curiosity with a cursory view of the chief streets, my obliging companion conducted me to the Custom-house, in order to procure a permit for landing my baggage. On arriving there, I was rather surprised to find, that the routine observed, in such matters in this republican country, is considerably more vexatious than in England. In New York, you are first required to swear that the specification given of the contents of your boxes is true; and then, as if no reliance were due to your oath, the officers proceed to a complete search. To the search, however troublesome, undoubtedly no objection can be made; but it does appear to be little better than an insulting mockery, to require an oath to which all credit is evidently denied. The proverb says, that “at lovers' vows Jove laughs;” and if, in America, the deity is supposed to extend his merriment to Custom-house oaths, it surely would be better to abolish a practice, which, to say nothing of its demoralizing 15 effects, is found to have no efficacy in the prevention of fraud. Certainly in no country of Europe is it usual to require an oath, in cases where it is not received as sufficient evidence of the fact deposed to; and why the practice should be different, under a government so popular as that of the United States, it would be difficult to determine.

Custom-house regulations, however, are matters on which most travellers are given to be censorious. In truth, I know nothing so trying to the equanimity of the mildest temper, as the unpleasant ceremony of having one's baggage rummaged over by the rude fists of a revenue officer. It is in vain to tell us, that this impertinent poking into our portmanteaus is just and proper; that the privilege is reciprocal between nations, each of which necessarily enjoys the right, of excluding altogether articles of foreign manufacture, or of attaching such conditions to their importation, as it may see fit. All this is very true, but the sense of personal indignity cannot be got over. There is nothing of national solemnity at all apparent in the operation. The investigator of our property is undistinguished by any outward symbol 16 of executive authority. It requires too great an effort of imagination, to regard a dirty Custom-house searcher, as a visible impersonation of the majesty of the law; and in

spite of ten thousand unanswerable reasons to the contrary, we cannot help considering his rigid examination of our cloak-bag and shaving-case, rather as an act of individual audacity, than the necessary and perfunctory discharge of professional duty. In short, the *searcher* and *searchee* stand to each other in the relation of *plus* and *minus* , and the latter has nothing for it, but to put his pride in his pocket, and keep down his choler as best he can, with the knowledge that being *pro tem.* in the hands of the Philistines, the smallest display of either could only tend to make things worse. It is always my rule, therefore, when possible, to avoid being present at the scene at all; and having, on the present occasion, given directions to my servant, to await the business of inspection, and afterwards to convey the baggage to the hotel, I again committed myself to the guidance of some of my American friends, and commenced another ramble through the city.

As we passed, many of the signs exhibited by the 17 different shops struck me as singular. Of these, “ Dry Good Store, ” words of which I confess I did not understand the precise import, was certainly the most prevalent. My companions informed me that the term *dry goods* is not, as might be supposed, generally applicable to merchandise devoid of moisture, but solely to articles composed of linen, silk, or woollen. “ Coffin Warehouse, ” however, was sufficiently explanatory of the nature of the commerce carried on within; but had it been otherwise, the sight of some scores of these dismal commodities, arranged in sizes, and ready for immediate use, would have been comment enough. “ Flour and Feed Store, ” and “ Oyster Refectory, ” were more grateful to the eye and the imagination. “ Hollow Ware, Spiders, and Fire Dogs, ” seemed to indicate some novel and anomalous traffic, and carried with it a certain dim and mystical sublimity, of which I shall not venture to divest it, by any attempt at explanation.

I was amused, too, with some of the placards which appeared on the walls. Many of these were political, and one in particular was so unintelligible, as to impose VOL. I. B 18 the task of a somewhat prolix commentary on my friends. It ran thus, in sesquipedalian characters, JACKSON FOR EVER.

GO THE WHOLE HOG!

When the sphere of my intelligence became enlarged with regard to this *affiche* , I learned, that “going the whole hog” is the American popular phrase for Radical Reform, and is used by the Democratic party to distinguish them from the Federalists, who are supposed to prefer less sweeping measures, and consequently *to go* only *a part* of the interesting quadruped in question. The *Go-the-whole-hoggers* , therefore, are politicians determined to follow out Democratic principles to their utmost extent, and with this party General Jackson is at present an especial favourite. The expression, I am told, is of Virginian origin. In that State, when a butcher kills a pig, it is usual to demand of each customer, whether he will “go the whole hog;” as, by such extensive traffic, a purchaser may supply his table at a lower price, than is demanded of him, whose imagination revels among *prime pieces* , to the exclusion of baser matter.

Before quitting the ship, it had been arranged 19 among a considerable number of the passengers, that we should dine together on the day of our arrival, as a proof of parting in kindness and good-fellowship. Niblo's tavern, the most celebrated eating-house in New York, was the scene chosen for this amicable celebration. Though a little tired with my walks of the morning, which the long previous confinement on ship-board had rendered more than usually fatiguing, I determined to explore my way on foot, and having procured the necessary directions at the hotel, again set forth. On my way, an incident occurred, which I merely mention to show how easily travellers like myself, on their first arrival in a country, may be led into a misconception of the character of the people. Having proceeded some distance, I found it necessary to enquire my way, and accordingly entered a small grocer's shop. “Pray, sir,” I said, “can you point out to me the way to Niblo's tavern?” The person thus addressed was rather a gruff-looking man, in a scratch-wig, and for at least half a minute, kept eyeing me from top to toe without uttering a syllable. “Yes, sir, I can,” 20 he at length replied, with a stare as broad as if he had taken me for the great Katterfelto. Considering this sort of treatment, as the mere ebullition of republican

insolence, I was in the act of turning on my heel and quitting the shop, when the man added, “and I shall have great pleasure in showing it you.” He then crossed the counter, and accompanying me to the middle of the street, pointed out the land-marks by which I was to steer, and gave the most minute directions for my guidance. I presume that his curiosity in the first instance was excited by something foreign in my appearance; and that having once satisfied himself that I was a stranger, he became on that account more than ordinarily anxious to oblige. This incident afforded me the first practical insight into the manners of the people, and was useful both as a precedent for future guidance, and as explaining the source of many of the errors of former travellers. Had my motion to quit the shop been executed with greater rapidity, I should certainly have considered this man as a brutal barbarian, and perhaps have drawn an unfair inference with regard to the 21 manners and character of the lower orders of society in the United States.

The dinner at Niblo's,—which may be considered the London Tavern of New York,—was certainly more excellent in point of material, than of cookery or arrangement. It consisted of oyster soup, shad, venison,* partridges, grouse, wild-ducks of different varieties, and several other dishes less notable. There was no attempt to serve this chaotic entertainment in courses, a fashion, indeed, but little prevalent in the United States. Soup, fish, flesh and fowl, simultaneously garnished the table; and the consequence was, that the greater part of the dishes were cold, before the guests were prepared to attack them. The venison was good, though certainly very inferior to that of the fallow-deer. The wines were excellent, the company agreeable in all respects, and altogether I do not remember to have passed a more pleasant evening, than that of my first arrival at New York.

* In regard to game, I adopt the nomenclature in common use in the United States. It may be as well to state, however, that neither the partridges nor the grouse bear any very close resemblance to the birds of the same name in Europe. Their flesh is dry, and comparatively without flavour.

CHAPTER II. NEW YORK.

I had nearly completed my toilet on the morning after my arrival, when the tinkling of a large bell gave intimation, that the hour of breakfast was come. I accordingly descended as speedily as possible to the *salle à manger* , and found a considerable party engaged in doing justice to a meal, which, at first glance, one would scarcely have guessed to be a breakfast. Solid viands of all descriptions loaded the table, while, in the occasional intervals, were distributed dishes of rolls, toast, and cakes of buckwheat and Indian corn. At the head of the table, sat the landlady, who, with an air of complacent dignity, was busied in the distribution of tea and coffee. A large bevy of negroes were bustling about, ministering with 23 all possible alacrity, to the many wants which were somewhat vociferously obtruded on their attention. Towards the upper end of the table, I observed about a dozen ladies, but by far the larger portion of the company were of the other sex.

The contrast of the whole scene, with that of an English breakfast-table, was striking enough. Here was no loitering nor lounging; no dipping into newspapers; no apparent lassitude of appetite; no intervals of repose in mastication; but all was hurry, bustle, clamour, and voracity, and the business of repletion went forward with a rapidity altogether unexampled. The strenuous efforts of the company were of course soon rewarded with success. Departures, which had begun even before I took my place at the table, became every instant more numerous, and in a few minutes the apartment had become, what Moore beautifully describes in one of his songs, “a banquet-hall deserted.” The appearance of the table under such circumstances, was by no means gracious either to the eye or the fancy. It was strewed thickly with the *disjecta membra* of the entertainment. Here lay fragments of fish, somewhat unpleasantly odoriferous; 24 there, the skeleton of a chicken; on the right, a mustard-pot upset, and the cloth, *passim* , defiled with stains of eggs, coffee, gravy—but I will not go on with the picture. One nasty custom, however, I must notice. Eggs, instead of being eat from the shell, are poured into a wine-glass, and after being duly and disgustingly churned up with butter and condiment, the mixture,

according to its degree of fluidity, is forthwith either spooned into the mouth, or drunk off like a liquid. The advantage gained by this unpleasant process, I do not profess to be qualified to appreciate, but I can speak from experience, to its sedative effect on the appetite of an unpractised beholder.

My next occupation was to look over my letters of introduction. Of these I found above thirty addressed to New York, and being by no means anxious to become involved in so wide a vortex of acquaintance, I requested one of my American fellow-passengers to select such, as, from his local knowledge, he imagined might prove of more immediate service to a traveller like myself. In consequence of this arrangement, about half the letters with which the kindness of my 25 friends had furnished me, were discarded, and I can truly say, that the very warm and obliging reception I experienced from those to whom I forwarded introductions, left me no room to regret the voluntary limitation of their number.

Having despatched my letters, and the morning being wet, I remained at home, busied in throwing together a few memoranda of such matters as appeared worthy of record. My labours, however, were soon interrupted. Several gentlemen who had heard of my arrival through the medium of my fellow-passengers, but on whose civility I had no claim, did me the honour to call, tendering a welcome to their city, and the still more obliging offer of their services. My letters, too, did not fail of procuring me a plentiful influx of visitors. Numerous invitations followed, and by the extreme kindness of my new friends, free admission was at once afforded me to the best society in New York.

The first impression made by an acquaintance with the better educated order of American gentlemen, is certainly very pleasing. There is a sort of republican plainness and simplicity in their address, quite in harmony VOL. I. C 26 with the institutions of their country. An American bows less than an Englishman; he deals less in mere conventional forms and expressions of civility; he pays few or no compliments; makes no unmeaning or overstrained professions; but he takes you by the hand with a cordiality which at once intimates, that he is disposed to regard you as a friend. Of that higher grace of manner,

inseparable perhaps from the artificial distinctions of European society, and of which even those most conscious of its hollowness, cannot always resist the attraction, few specimens are of course to be found, in a country like the United States; but of this I am sure, that such a reception as I experienced in New York, is far more gratifying to a stranger, than the farce of ceremony, however gracefully it may be performed.

Perhaps I was the more flattered by the kindness of my reception, from having formed anticipations of a less pleasing character. The Americans I had met in Europe had generally been distinguished by a certain reserve, and something even approaching to the offensive in manner, which had not contributed to create a prepossession in their favour. It seemed, as if each individual were impressed with the conviction 27 that the whole dignity of his country was concentred in his person; and I imagined them too much given to disturb the placid current of social intercourse, by the obtrusion of national jealousies, and the cravings of a restless and inordinate vanity. It is indeed highly probable, that these unpleasant peculiarities were called into more frequent display, by that air of haughty repulsion, in which too many of my countrymen have the bad taste to indulge; but even from what I have already seen, I feel sure that an American at home, is a very different person from an American abroad. With his foot on his native soil, he appears in his true character; he moves in the sphere, for which his habits and education have peculiarly adapted him, and surrounded by his fellow-citizens, he at once gets rid of the embarrassing conviction, that he is regarded as an individual impersonation of the whole honour of the Union. In England, he is generally anxious to demonstrate by indifference of manner, that he is not dazzled by the splendour which surrounds him, and too solicitously forward in denying the validity of all pretensions, which he fears the world 28 may consider as superior to his own. But in his own country, he stands confessedly on a footing with the highest. His national vanity remains unruffled by opposition or vexatious comparison, and his life passes on in a dreamy and complacent contemplation of the high part, which, in her growing greatness, the United States is soon to assume, in the mighty drama of the world. His imagination is no longer troubled with visions of lords and palaces, and footmen

in embroidery and cocked hats; or if he think of these things at all, it is in a spirit far more philosophical, than that with which he once regarded them. Connected with England by commercial relations, by community of literature, and a thousand ties, which it will still require centuries to obliterate, he cannot regard her destinies without deep interest. In the contests in which, by the calls of honour, or by the folly of her rulers, she may be engaged, the reason of an American may be against England, but his heart is always with her. He is ever ready to extend to her sons the rites of kindness and hospitality, and is more flattered by their praise, and more keenly sensitive to their 29 censure, than is perhaps quite consistent with a just estimate of the true value of either.

I remember no city which has less to show in the way of *Lions* than New York. The whole interest attaching to it, consists in the general appearance of the place; in the extreme activity and bustle which is everywhere apparent, and in the rapid advances which it has made, and is still making, in opulence and population. In an architectural view, New York has absolutely nothing to arrest the attention. The only building of pretension is the State-House, or City-Hall, in which the courts of law hold their sittings. In form, it is an oblong parallelogram, two stories in height, exclusive of the basement, with an Ionic portico of white marble, which instead of a pediment, is unfortunately surmounted by a balcony. Above is a kind of lantern or pepper-box, which the taste of the architect has led him to substitute for a dome. From the want of simplicity, the effect of the whole is poor, and certainly not improved by the vicinity of a very ugly gaol, which might be advantageously removed to some less obtrusive situation.

30

The Exchange is a petty affair, and unworthy of a community so large and opulent as that of New York. With regard to churches, those frequented by the wealthier classes are built of stone, but the great majority are of timber. Their architecture in general is anomalous enough; and the wooden spires, terminating in gorgeous weathercocks, are as gay as the lavish employment of the painter's brush can make them.

But the chief attraction of New York is the Broadway, which runs through the whole extent of the city, and forms as it were the central line from which the other streets diverge to the quays on the Hudson and East River. It is certainly a handsome street, and the complete absence of regularity in the buildings,—which are of all sizes and materials, from the wooden cottage of one story, to the massive brick edifice of five or six,—gives to Broadway a certain picturesque effect, incompatible, perhaps, with greater regularity of architecture. Towards the southern extremity, the sides are skirted by a row of stunted and miserable-looking trees, useless either for shade 31 or ornament, which breaks the unity of the street without compensation of any sort.

The shops in Broadway are the depots of all the fashionable merchandise of the city, but somewhat deficient in external attractions, to eyes accustomed to the splendour of display in Regent Street, or Oxford Road. About two o'clock, however, the scene in Broadway becomes one of pleasing bustle and animation. The *trottoirs* are then crowded with gaily dressed ladies, and that portion of the younger population, whom the absence of more serious employment enables to appear in the character of beaux. The latter, however, is small. From the general air and appearance of the people, it is quite easy to gather, that trade in some of its various branches, is the engrossing object of every one, from the youth of fifteen, to the veteran of fourscore, who, from force of habit, still lags superfluous on the Exchange. There are no morning loungers in New York; and the ladies generally walk unattended; but in the evening, I am told, it is different, and the business of gallantry goes on quite as hopefully, as on our side of the water.

I have observed many countenances remarkable for 32 beauty, among the more youthful portion of the fair promenaders. But unfortunately beauty in this climate is not durable. Like “the ghosts of Banquo's fated line,” it comes like a shadow, and so departs. At one or two-and-twenty the bloom of an American lady is gone, and the more substantial materials of beauty follow soon after. At thirty the whole fabric is in decay, and nothing remains but the

tradition of former conquests, and anticipations of the period, when her reign of triumph will be vicariously restored in the person of her daughter.

The fashions of Paris reach even to New York, and the fame of Madame Maradan has already transcended the limits of the Old World, and is diffused over the New. I pretend to be something of a judge in such matters, and therefore pronounce *ex cathedrâ* , that the ladies of New York are well dressed, and far from inelegant. The average of height is certainly lower than among my fair countrywomen; the cheek is without colour, and the figure sadly deficient in *en-bon-point.* But with all these disadvantages, I do not remember to have seen more beauty than I have met in New York. The features are generally finely 33 moulded, and not unfrequently display a certain delightful harmony, which reminds one of the *belle donne* of St Peter's and the Pincian Mount. The mouth alone is not beautiful; it rarely possesses the charm of fine teeth, and the lips want colour and fulness. The carriage of these fair Americans is neither French nor English, for they have the good sense to adopt the peculiarities of neither. They certainly do not paddle along, with the short steps and affected carriage of a Parisian belle, nor do they consider it becoming, to walk the streets with the stride of a grenadier. In short, though I may have occasionally encountered more grace, than has met my observation since my arrival in the United States, assuredly I have never seen less of external deportment, which the most rigid and fastidious critic could fairly censure.

One of my earliest occupations was to visit the courts of law. In the first I entered, there were two judges on the bench, and a jury in the box, engaged in the trial of an action of assault and battery, committed by one female on another. It is scarcely possible to conceive the administration of justice invested 34 with fewer forms. Judges and barristers were both wigless and gownless, and dressed in garments of such colour and fashion, as the taste of the individual might dictate. There was no mace, nor external symbol of authority of any sort, except the staves which I observed in the hands of a few constables, or officers of the court. In the trial there was no more interest than what the quarrel of two old women, in any country, may be supposed to excite. The witnesses, I thought,

gave their evidence with a greater appearance of phlegm and indifference than is usual in our courts at home. No one seemed to think, that any peculiar decorum of deportment was demanded by the solemnity of the court. The first witness examined, held the Bible in one hand, while he kept the other in his breeches pocket, and, in giving his evidence, stood lounging with his arm thrown over the bench. The judges were men about fifty, with nothing remarkable in the mode of discharging their duty. The counsel were younger, and, so far as I could judge, by no means deficient either in zeal for the cause of their clients, or ingenuity in maintaining it. The only unpleasant part of the spectacle,—for 35 I do not suppose that justice could be administered in any country with greater substantial purity,—was the incessant salivation going forward in all parts of the court. Judges, counsel, jury, witnesses, officers, and audience, all contributed to augment the mass of abomination; and the floor around the table of the lawyers presented an appearance, on which even now I find it not very pleasant for the imagination to linger.

Having satisfied my curiosity in this court, I entered another, which I was informed was the Supreme Court of the state. The proceedings here were, if possible, less interesting than those I had already witnessed. The court were engaged in hearing arguments connected with a bill of exchange, and, whether in America or England, a speech on such a subject must be a dull affair; I was therefore on the point of departing, when a jury, which had previously retired to deliberate, came into court, and proceeded in the usual form to deliver their verdict. It was not without astonishment, I confess, that I remarked that three-fourths of the jurymen were engaged in eating bread and cheese, and that the foreman actually announced the verdict with his mouth 36 full, ejecting the disjointed syllables during the intervals of mastication! In truth, an American seems to look on a judge, exactly as he does on a carpenter or coppersmith, and it never occurs to him, that an administrator of justice is entitled to greater respect than a constructor of brass knockers, or the sheather of a ship's bottom. The judge and the brazier are paid equally for their work; and Jonathan firmly believes, that while he has money in his pocket, there is no risk of his suffering from the want either of law or warming pans.

I cannot think, however, that with respect to these matters, legislation in this country has proceeded on very sound and enlightened principles. A very clever lawyer asked me last night, whether the sight of their courts had not cured me of my *John Bullish* predilection for robes, wigs, and maces, and all the other trumpery and irrational devices, for imposing on weak minds. I answered, it had not; nay, so far was the case otherwise, that had I before been disposed to question the utility of those forms to which he objected, what I had witnessed since my arrival in New York, would have removed all doubts on the 37 subject. A good deal of discussion followed, and though each of us persisted in maintaining his own opinion, it is only justice to state, that the argument was conducted by my opponent with the utmost liberality and fairness. I refrain from giving the details of this conversation, because a “protocol” signed only by one of the parties is evidently a document of no weight, and where a casuist enjoys the privilege of adducing the arguments on both sides, it would imply an almost superhuman degree of self-denial, were he not to urge the best on his own, and range himself on the side of the gods, leaving that of Cato to his opponent.

It is a custom in this country to ask, and generally with an air of some triumph, whether an Englishman supposes there is wisdom in a wig; and whether a few pounds of horsehair set on a judge's skull, and plastered with pomatum and powder, can be imagined to bring with it any increase of knowledge to the mind of the person whose cranium is thus disagreeably enveloped? The answer is, No; we by no means hold, either that a head *au naturel* , or that garments of fustian or corduroy, are at all unfavourable 38 to legal discrimination; and are even ready to admit, that in certain genial regions, a judge *in cuerpo* , and seated on a wooden stool, might be as valuable and efficient an administrator of law, as one wigged to the middle, and clad in scarlet and ermine. But if any American be so deficient in dialectic, as to imagine that this admission involves a surrender of the question in debate, we would beg leave respectfully to remind him, that the schoolmaster is abroad, and recommend him to improve his logic with the least possible delay. If man were a being of pure reason, forms would be unnecessary. But he who should legislate on such an assumption, would

afford ample evidence of his own unfitness for legislation. Man is a creature of senses and imagination, and even in religion, the whole experience of the world has borne testimony to the necessity of some external rite, or solemnity of observance, to stimulate his devotion, and enable him to concentrate his faculties, for the worship of that awful and incomprehensible Being, “whose kingdom is, where time and space are not.” It is difficult to see on what principle, those who approve the stole of the priest, and cover their generals 39 and admirals with gold lace, can condemn as irrational, all external symbols of dignity, on the part of the judge. Let the Americans at all events be consistent: While they address their judges by a title of honour, let them at least be protected from rudeness, and vulgar familiarity; and they may, perhaps, be profitably reminded, that the respect exacted in a British court of justice, is homage not to the individual seated on the bench, but to the law, in the person of its minister. Law is the only bond by which society is held together; its administration, therefore, should ever be marked out to the imagination, as well as to the reason of the great body of a nation, as an act of peculiar and paramount solemnity; and when an Englishman sees the decencies of life habitually violated in the very seat of justice, he naturally feels the less disposed to dispense with those venerable forms with which, in his own country, it has been wisely encircled. Our answer therefore is, *that it is precisely to avoid such a state of things as now exists in the American courts* , that the solemnities which invest the discharge of the judicial office in England, were originally imposed, and are still maintained. 40 We regard ceremonies of all sorts, not as things important in themselves, but simply as means conducing to an end. It matters not by what particular process,—by what routine of observance,—by what visible attributes, the dignity of justice is asserted, and its sanctity impressed on the memory and imagination. But at least let this end, by some means or other, be secured; and if this be done, we imagine there is little chance of our adopting many of the forensic habits of our friends on this side of the Atlantic.

At New York, the common dinner hour is three o'clock, and I accordingly hurried back to the hotel. Having made such changes and ablutions as the heat of the court-rooms

had rendered necessary, I descended to the *bar* , an apartment furnished with a counter, across which supplies of spirits and cigars are furnished to all who desiderate such luxuries. The bar, in short, is the lounging place of the establishment; and here, when the hour of dinner is at hand, all the inmates of the hotel may be found collected. On the present occasion, the room was so full, that I really found it difficult to get farther than the door. At length a bell sounded, and no sooner did its first 41 vibration reach the ears of the party, than a sudden rush took place towards the diningroom, in which—being carried forward by the crowd—I soon found myself. The extreme precipitation of this movement appeared somewhat superfluous, as there was evidently no difficulty in procuring places; and on looking round the apartment, I perceived the whole party comfortably seated.

To a gentleman with a keen appetite, the *coup d'œil* of the dinner-table was far from unpleasing. The number of dishes was very great. The style of cookery neither French nor English, though certainly approaching nearer to the latter, than to the former. The dressed dishes were decidedly bad, the sauces being composed of little else than liquid grease, which, to a person like myself, who have an inherent detestation of every modification of oleaginous matter, was an objection altogether insuperable. On the whole, however, it would be unjust to complain. If, as the old adage hath it, “in the multitude of counsellors there is wisdom,” so may it be averred, as equally consistent with human experience, that in the multitude of dishes there is good eating. After several VOL. I. D 42 unsuccessful experiments, I did discover unobjectionable viands, and made as good a dinner as the ambition of an old campaigner could desire.

Around, I beheld the same scene of gulping and swallowing, as if for a wager, which my observations at breakfast had prepared me to expect. In my own neighbourhood there was no conversation. Each individual seemed to *pitchfork* his food down his gullet, without the smallest attention to the wants of his neighbour. If you asked a gentleman to help you from any dish before him, he certainly complied, but in a manner that showed you had imposed on him a disagreeable task; and instead of a *slice* , your plate generally returned loaded

with a solid massive wedge of animal matter. It was evident that the New York carvers had never graduated at Vauxhall.

Brandy bottles were ranged at intervals along the table, from which each guest helped himself as he thought proper. As the dinner advanced, the party rapidly diminished; before the second course, a considerable number had taken their departure, and comparatively few waited the appearance of the dessert. Though brandy was the prevailing beverage, there 43 were many also who drank wine, and a small knot of three or four (whom I took to be countrymen of my own) were still continuing the carousal when I left the apartment.

An American is by no means a convivial being. He seems to consider eating and drinking as necessary tasks, which he is anxious to discharge as speedily as possible. I was at first disposed to attribute this singularity to the claims of business, which, in a mercantile community, might be found inconsistent with more prolonged enjoyment of the table. But this theory was soon relinquished, for I could not but observe, that many of the most expeditious bolters of dinner spent several hours afterwards, in smoking and lounging at the bar.

At six o'clock the bell rings for tea, when the party musters again, though generally in diminished force. This meal is likewise provided with its due proportion of solids. The most remarkable was raw hung beef, cut into thin slices, of which,— *horresco referens* , —I observed that even ladies did not hesitate to partake. The tea and coffee were both execrable. A supper, of cold meat, &c., follows at ten o'clock, and remains 44 on the table till twelve, when eating terminates for the day. Such is the unvarying routine of a New York hotel.

On the first Sunday after my arrival, I attended divine service in Grace Church, which is decidedly the most fashionable place of worship in New York. The congregation, though very numerous, was composed almost exclusively of the wealthier class; and the gay dresses of the ladies—whose taste generally leads to a preference of the brightest colours

—produced an effect not unlike that of a bed of tulips. Nearly in front of the reading desk, a comfortable chair and hassock had been provided for a poor old woman, apparently about fourscore. There was something very pleasing in this considerate and benevolent attention to the infirmities of a helpless and withered creature, who probably had outlived her friends, and was soon about to rejoin them in the grave.

The Episcopal church of America differs little in formula from that of England. The liturgy is the same, though here and there an expression has been altered, not always, I think, for the better. In the first clause of the Lord's Prayer, for instance, the 2 45 word “which” has been changed into “who,” on the score of grammatical propriety. This is poor criticism, for, it will scarcely be denied, that the use of the neuter pronoun carried with it a certain vagueness and sublimity, not inappropriate in reminding us, that our worship is addressed to a Being incomprehensible, infinite, and superior to all the distinctions applicable to material objects. In truth, the grammatical anomaly so obnoxious to the American critics, is not a blemish, but a felicity. A few judicious retrenchments have also been made in the service, and many of those repetitions which tend sadly to dilute the devotional feeling, by overstraining the attention, have been removed.

Trinity Church, in Broadway, is remarkable as being the most richly endowed establishment in the Union, and peculiarly interesting, from containing in its cemetery the remains of the celebrated General Hamilton. I have always regarded the melancholy fate of this great statesman with interest. Hamilton was an American, not by birth, but by adoption. He was born in the West Indies, but claimed descent from a respectable Scottish family. It may be truly said of him, that with every temptation 46 to waver in his political course, the path he followed was a straight one. He was too honest, and too independent, to truckle to a mob, and too proud to veil or modify opinions, which, he must have known, were little calculated to secure popular favour. Hamilton brought to the task of legislation, a powerful and perspicacious intellect, and a memory stored with the results of the experience of past ages. He viewed mankind not as a theorist, but as a practical philosopher, and was never deceived by the false and flimsy dogmas

of human perfectibility, which dazzled the weaker vision of such men as Jefferson and Madison. In activity of mind, in soundness of judgment, and in extent and accuracy of knowledge, he unquestionably stood the first man of his age and country. While the apprehensions of other statesmen were directed against the anticipated encroachments of the executive power, Hamilton saw clearly that the true danger menaced from another quarter. He was well aware that democracy, not monarchy, was the rock on which the future destinies of his country were in peril of shipwreck. He was, therefore, desirous that the new Federal Constitution should be framed as 47 much as possible on the model of that of England, which, beyond all previous experience, had been found to produce the result of secure and rational liberty. It is a false charge on Hamilton, that he contemplated the introduction of monarchy, or of the corruption which had contributed to impair the value of the British constitution; but he certainly was anxious that a salutary and effective check should be found in the less popular of the legislative bodies, on the occasional rash and hasty impulses of the other. He was favourable to a senate chosen for life; to a federal government sufficiently strong to enforce its decrees in spite of party opposition, and the conflicting jealousies of the different States; to a representation rather founded on property and intelligence than on mere numbers; and perhaps of the two evils, would have preferred the tyranny of a single dictator, to the more degrading despotism of a mob.

Hamilton was snatched from his country, in the prime of life and of intellect. Had he lived, it is difficult to foresee what influence his powerful mind might have exercised on the immediate destinies of his country. By his talents and unrivalled powers 48 as an orator, he might have gained fair audience, and some favour for his opinions. But this could not have been lasting. His doctrines of government in their very nature were necessarily unpopular. The Federalist party from the first occupied a false position. They attempted to convince the multitude of their unfitness for the exercise of political power. This of course failed. The influence they obtained in the period immediately succeeding the revolution, was solely that of talent and character. Being personal, it died with the men, and sometimes before them. It was impossible for human efforts to diminish the

democratic impulse given by the revolution, or to be long successful in retarding its increase. In the very first struggle, the Federalists were defeated once and for ever, and the tenure of power by the Republican party has ever since, with one brief and partial exception, continued unbroken.

There is another tomb which I would notice before quitting the churchyard of Trinity. On a slab, surmounting an oblong pile of masonry, are engraved the following words:

49

MY MOTHER.

THE TRUMPET SHALL SOUND, AND THE DEAD SHALL ARISE.

This is the whole inscription; and as I read the words I could not but feel it to be sublimely affecting. The name of him who erected this simple monument of filial piety, or of her whose dust it covers, is unpreserved by tradition. Why should that be told, which the world cares not to know? It is enough, that the nameless tenant of this humble grave shall be known, “when the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall arise.” Let us trust, that the mother and her child will then be reunited, to part no more.

One of the earliest occupations of a traveller in a strange city, is to visit the theatres. There are three in New York, and I am assured, that both actors and managers prosper in their vocation. Such a circumstance is not insignificant. It marks opulence and comfort, and proves that the great body of the people, after providing the necessaries of life, possess a surplus, which they feel at liberty to lavish on its enjoyments. VOL. I. E 50 I have already been several times to the Park Theatre, which is considered the most fashionable. The house is very comfortable, and well adapted both for seeing and hearing. On my first visit, the piece was Der Freischutz, which was very wretchedly performed. The farce was new to me, and, I imagine, of American origin. The chief character is a pompous old baronet, very proud of his family, and exceedingly tenacious of respect. In his old age he has the folly to think of marrying, and the still greater folly, to imagine the attractions of his

person and pedigree irresistible. As may be anticipated, he is the laughing-stock of the piece. Insult and ridicule follow him in every scene,; he is kicked and cuffed to the hearty content of the audience, who return home full of contempt for the English aristocracy, and chuckling at the thought that there are no baronets in America.

My curiosity was somewhat excited by the high reputation which an actor named Forrest has acquired in this country. As a tragedian, in the estimate of all American critics, he is without blemish, and without rival. To place him on a level with Kean, or 51 Young, or Kemble, or Macready, would be considered as an unwarranted derogation from his merits.

I have since seen this *rara avis* , and confess that the praise so profusely lavished does appear somewhat gratuitous. To me, he seemed a coarse and vulgar actor, without grace, without dignity, with little flexibility of feature, and utterly commonplace in his conceptions of character. There is certainly some energy about him, but this is sadly given to degenerate into rant. The audience, however, were enraptured. Every increase of voice in the actor was followed by louder thunders from box, pit, and gallery, till it sometimes became matter of serious calculation, how much longer one's tympanum could stand the crash. I give my impression of this gentleman's histrionic merits the more freely, because I know he is too firmly established in the high opinion of his countrymen, to be susceptible of injury from the criticism of a foreigner, with all his prejudices, inherent and attributive. Perhaps indeed he owes something of the admiration which follows him on the stage, to the excellence of his character in private life. Forrest has realized a large fortune; and I hear 52 from all quarters, that in the discharge of every moral and social duty, he is highly exemplary. His literary talents, I am assured, are likewise respectable.

My fellow-passenger, Master Burke, draws full houses every night of his performance. Each time I have seen him, my estimate of his powers has been raised. In farce, he does admirably; but what must be said of the taste of an audience, who can even tolerate the mimicry of a child, in such parts as Lear, Shylock, Richard, and Iago?

No one can be four-and-twenty hours in New York without hearing the alarm of fire. Indeed, a conflagration here is so very ordinary an occurrence, that it is attended by none of that general anxiety and excitement which follow such a calamity in cities less accustomed to combustion. The New York firemen are celebrated for resolution and activity; and as the exercise of these qualities is always pleasant to witness, I have made it a point to attend all fires since my arrival. The four first were quite insignificant, indeed three of the number were extinguished before my arrival, and I barely got up in time to catch a glimpse of the expiring embers of the fourth. 53 But in regard to the fifth, I was in better luck. Having reached the scene, more than half expecting it would turn out as trumpery an affair as its predecessors, I had at length the satisfaction of beholding a very respectable volume of flame bursting from the windows and roof of a brick tenement of four stories, with as large an accompaniment of smoke, bustle, clamour, and confusion as could reasonably be desired. An engine came up almost immediately after my arrival, and loud cries, and the rattle of approaching wheels from either extremity of the street, gave notice that further assistance was at hand. Some time was lost in getting water, and I should think the municipal arrangements, in regard to this matter, might be better managed. In a few minutes, however, the difficulty was surmounted, and the two elements were brought fairly into collision.

The firemen are composed of young citizens, who, by volunteering this service,—and a very severe one it is,—enjoy an exemption from military duty. Certainly nothing could exceed their boldness and activity. Ladders were soon planted; the walls were scaled; furniture was carried from the house, and 54 thrown from the windows, without apparent concern for the effects its descent might produce on the skulls of the spectators in the street. Fresh engines were continually coming up, and brought into instant play. But as the power of water waxed, so unfortunately did that of the adverse element; and so far as the original building was concerned, the odds soon became Pompey's pillar to a stick of sealing-wax, on fire.

Day now closed, and the scene amid the darkness became greatly increased in picturesque beauty. At intervals human figures were seen striding through flame, and then vanishing amid the smoke. In the street, confusion became worse confounded. Had the crowd been composed of Stentors, the clamour could not have been louder. The inhabitants of the adjoining houses, who, till now, seemed to have taken the matter very coolly, at length became alarmed, when the engines began to play on them, and ejected a torrent of chairs, wardrobes, feather-beds, and other valuable chattels from every available aperture. The house in which the fire broke out was now a mere shell; the roof gone, and all the wooden-work consumed. The flames then burst forth in the roof 55 of an adjoining tenement, but the concentrated play of many engines soon subdued it. All danger was then at an end. The inhabitants began to reclaim the furniture which they had tumbled out into the street, and I have no doubt went afterwards to bed as comfortably as if nothing had happened. I saw several of the inmates of the house that had been burned, and examined their countenances with some curiosity. No symptom of excitement was apparent, and I gave them credit for a degree of *nonchalance* , far greater than I should have conceived possible in the circumstances.

On the whole, I have no deduction to make from the praises so frequently bestowed on the New York firemen. The chief defect that struck me, was the admission of the crowd to the scene of action. This caused, and must always cause, confusion. In England, barriers are thrown across the street at some distance, and rigorously guarded by the police and constables. On suggesting this improvement to an American friend, he agreed it would be desirable, but assured me it was not calculated for the meridian of the United States, where exclusion of any kind is 56 always adverse to the popular feeling. On this matter, of course, I cannot judge, but it seems to me evident, that if the exclusion of an idle mob from the scene of a fire, increases the chance of saving property and life, the freedom thus pertinaciously insisted on, is merely that of doing private injury and public mischief.

With regard to the frequency of fires in New York, I confess, that after listening to all possible explanations, it does appear to me unaccountable. I am convinced, that in this single city there are annually more fires than occur in the whole island of Great Britain. The combustible materials of which the majority of the houses are composed, is a circumstance far from sufficient to account for so enormous a disparity. Can we attribute it to crime? I think not; at least it would require much stronger evidence than has yet been discovered to warrant the hypothesis. In the negligence of servants, we have surer ground. These are generally negroes, and rarely to be depended on in any way, when exempt from rigid *surveillance.* But I am not going to concoct a theory, and so leave the matter as I find it.

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CHAPTER III. NEW YORK—HUDSON RIVER.

The 25th of November, being the anniversary of the evacuation of the city by the British army, is always a gala-day at New York. To perpetuate the memory of this glorious event, there is generally a parade of the militia, some firing of cannon and small arms, a procession of the different trades, and the day then terminates as it ought, in profuse and patriotic jollification. But on the present occasion it was determined, in addition to the ordinary cause of rejoicing, to get up a pageant of unusual splendour, in honour of the late revolution in France. This resolution, I was informed, originated exclusively in the operative class, or *workies* , as they call themselves, in contradistinction to those who live in better houses, eat 58 better dinners, read novels and poetry, and drink old Madeira instead of Yankee rum. The latter and more enviable class, however, having been taught caution by experience, were generally disposed to consider the present congratulatory celebration as somewhat premature. Finding, however, that it could not be prevented, they prudently gave in, and determined to take part in the pageant.

It was arranged, that should the weather prove unfavourable on the 25th, the celebration should be deferred till the day following. Nor was this precaution unwise. The morning

of the appointed day was as unpropitious, as the most strenuous advocate of legitimacy could have desired. The rain came down in torrents; the streets were flooded ankle-deep, and I could not help feeling strong compassion for a party of militia, with a band of music, who with doleful aspect, and drenched to the skin, paraded past the hotel, to the tune of Yankee Doodle. But the morning following was of better promise: the rain had ceased, and though cold and cloudy, it was calm.

About ten o'clock, therefore, I betook myself to a house in Broadway, to which I had been obligingly 59 invited to see the procession. During my progress, every thing gave note of preparation. The shops were closed, and men in military garb, and others decorated with scarfs and ribbons, were seen moving hastily along to their appointed stations. On approaching the route of the procession, the crowd became more dense, and the steps in front of the houses were so completely jammed up with human beings, that it was with difficulty I reached the door of that to which I was invited.

Having at length effected an entrance, I enjoyed the honour of introduction to a large and very pleasant party, so that, though a considerable time elapsed before the appearance of the pageant, I felt no inclination to complain of the delay. At length the sound of distant music reached the ear; the thunder of drums, the contralto of the fife, the loud clash of cymbals, and first and farthest heard, the spirit-stirring notes of the trumpet.

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On they came, a glorious cavalcade, making heaven 60 vocal with sound of triumph, and earth beautiful with such colouring as nature never scattered from her pictured urn.

And first appeared, gorgeously caparisoned, a gallant steed bestrode by a cavalier, whose high and martial bearing bespoke him the hero of a hundred fights. The name of this chieftain I was not fortunate enough to learn. Next passed a body of militia, who, if they wished to appear as unlike soldiers as possible, were assuredly most successful. Then

came the trades. Butchers on horseback, or drawn in a sort of rustic arbour or shambles, tastefully festooned with sausages. Tailors, with cockades and breastknots of ribbon, pacing to music, with banners representative of various garments, waving proudly in the wind. Blacksmiths, with forge and bellows. Caravans of cobblers most seducingly appareled, and working at their trade on a locomotive platform, which displayed their persons to the best advantage. And carpenters too,—but the rest must be left to the imagination of the reader; and if he throw in a few bodies of militia, a few bands of music, and a good many 61 most *outré* and unmilitary-looking officers, appareled in uniforms apparently of the last century, he will form a very tolerable idea of the spectacle.

I must not, however, omit to notice the fire engines, which formed a very prominent part of the procession, it fortunately happening that no houses were just at that moment in conflagration. These engines were remarkably clean and in high order, and being adorned with a good deal of taste, attracted a large share of admiration. Altogether, it really did seem as if this gorgeous pageant were interminable, and, like a dinner in which there is too large a succession of courses, it was impossible to do equal justice to all its attractions. In the latter case, the fervour with which we demonstrate our approbation of one dish, forces us to disregard the charms of another. And thus it was, that I, fervent in my admiration of the butchers, was, in due course, charmed with the carpenters, and subsequently smitten with the singular splendour of the saddlers. But another and another still succeeded, till the eye and tongue of the spectator became literally bankrupt in applause. *Est modus et dulci;* in short, there was too much of it, and one could not 62 help feeling, after three hours of incessant admiration, how practicable it was to become satiated with pomp, as well as with other good things.

But the procession did at length pass, and I walked on to Washington Square, in which the ceremonies of the day were to conclude with the delivery of a public oration. On arriving, I found that a large stage, or hustings, had been erected in the centre of the square. Above this stage rose another smaller platform, for the accommodation of the high functionaries of the state and city. As even the advanced guard of the procession had not yet given

signal of its approach, it was evident that some delay must occur, and I therefore accepted an invitation to one of the houses in the square, where I found a very brilliant concourse of naval and military officers, and other persons of distinction. Among these was the venerable Ex-president Munroe. It was, of course, not without interest that I gazed on an individual who had played so distinguished a part during the most perilous epoch of American history. He was evidently bent down by the united inroads of age and infirmity; and it was with regret I learned, that to those afflictions, which 63 are the common lot of humanity, had been added those of poverty. The expression of Mr Munroe's countenance was mild, though not, I thought, highly intellectual. His forehead was not prominent, yet capacious and well defined. His eye was lustreless, and his whole frame emaciated and feeble. It was gratifying to witness the respect paid to this aged statesman by all who approached him; and I was delighted to hear the loud demonstrations of reverence and honour, with which his appearance in the street was hailed by the crowd.

Mr Munroe being too feeble to walk even so short a distance, was conveyed to the hustings in an open carriage. His equipage was followed by a *cortège* of functionaries on foot; and accompanying these gentlemen, I was admitted without difficulty to the lower platform, which contained accommodation for about a hundred. Having arrived there, we had still to wait some time for the commencement of the performance, during which some vociferous manifestations of disapprobation were made by the mob, who were prevented from approaching the hustings by an armed force of militia. At length, however, a portly 64 gentleman came forward, and read aloud the address to the French inhabitants of New York, which had been passed at a public meeting. In particular, I observed that his countenance and gestures were directed towards a party of gentlemen of that nation, who occupied a conspicuous station on the stage beneath him. The document was too wordy and prolix, and written in a style of ambitious elaboration, which I could not help considering as somewhat puerile.

While all this was going forward on the hustings, the crowd without were becoming every instant more violent and clamorous; and a couple of boys were opportunely discovered

beneath the higher scaffolding, engaged, either from malice or fun, in knocking away its supports, altogether unembarrassed by the consideration, that had their efforts been successful, they must themselves have been inevitably crushed in the fall of the platform.

Notwithstanding these *désagrémens* , the orator—a gentleman named Governor—came forward with a long written paper, which he commmenced reading in a voice scarcely audible on the hustings, and which certainly could not be heard beyond its limits. The I 65 crowd, in consequence, became still more obstreperous. Having, no doubt, formed high anticipations of pleasure and instruction from the inspiration of this gentleman's eloquence, it was certainly provoking to discover, that not one morsel of it were they destined to enjoy. The orator was, in consequence, addressed in ejaculations by no means complimentary, and such cries as—“Raise your voice, and be damned to you?”—“Louder!”—“Speak out!”—“We don't hear a word!” were accompanied by curses which I trust were not deep, in proportion either to their loudness or their number. In vain did Mr Governor strain his throat, in compliance with this unreasonable requisition, but Nature had not formed him either a Hunt or an O'Connell, and the ill-humour of the multitude was not diminished.

At length order seemed at an end. A number of the mob broke through the barricade of soldiers, and, climbing up the hustings, increased the party there in a most unpleasant degree. But this was not all. The dissatisfied crowd below, thought proper to knock away the supports of the scaffolding, and just as Mr Governor was pronouncing a most emphatic period VOL. I. F 66 about the slavery of Ireland, down one side of it came with an alarming crash. Fortunately some gentlemen had the good sense to exhort every one to remain unmoved; and from a prudent compliance with this precaution, I believe little injury was sustained by any of the party. For myself, however, being already somewhat tired of the scene, the panic had no sooner ceased, than I took my departure.

Altogether, I must say that the multitude out of earshot had no great loss. The oration appeared a mere trumpery tissue of florid claptrap, which somewhat lowered my opinion with regard to the general standard of taste and intelligence in the American people. On

the whole, the affair was a decided failure. What others went to see I know not, but had I not anticipated something better worth looking at, than a cavalcade of artisans mounted on cart-horses, and dressed out in tawdry finery, or the burlesque of military display by bodies of undrilled militia, I should probably have staid at home. I do not say this is in allusion to any deficiency of splendour in the pageant itself. A republic can possess but few materials for display, and in the present case I should not have 67 felt otherwise, had the procession been graced by all the dazzling appendages of imperial grandeur. In truth, I had calculated on a sight altogether different. I expected to see a vast multitude animated by one pervading feeling of generous enthusiasm; to hear the air rent by the triumphant shouts of tens of thousands of freemen, hailing the bloodless dawn of liberty, in a mighty member of the brotherhood of nations. As it was, I witnessed nothing so sublime. Throughout the day, there was not the smallest demonstration of enthusiasm on the part of the vast concourse of spectators. There was no cheering, no excitement, no general expression of feeling of any sort; and I believe the crowd thought just as much of France as of Morocco,—of the Cham of Tartary, as of Louis Philippe, King of the French. They looked and laughed indeed at the novel sight of their fellow tradesmen and apprentices tricked out in ribbons and white stockings, and pacing, with painted banners, to the sound of music. But the *moral* of the display, if I may so speak, was utterly overlooked. The people seemed to gaze on the scene before them with the same feeling as Peter Bell did on a primrose; 68 and it was evident enough—if, without irreverence, I may be permitted to parody the fine words of the noblest of contemporary poets—that in the unexcited imagination of each spectator,

A butcher on his steed so trim, A mounted butcher was to him, And he was nothing more.

Such was the source of my disappointment in regard to this splendid festivity. How far it was reasonable, others may decide. I can only say I felt it.

One of the most pleasant evenings I have passed since my arrival, was at a club composed of gentlemen of literary taste, which includes among its members several

very eminent individuals. The meetings are weekly, and take place at the house of each member in succession. The party generally assembles about eight o'clock; an hour or two is spent in conversation; supper follows; and after a moderate, though social potation, the meeting breaks up. I had here the honour of being introduced to Mr Livingston lieutenant-goyernor of the State, Mr Gallatin, Mr Jay, and several other gentlemen of high accomplishment.

69

Mr Gallatin I regarded with peculiar interest. His name was one with which I had been long familiar. Born in Switzerland, he became a citizen of the United States, soon after the Revolution, and found there a field, in which it was not probable that talents like his would remain long without high and profitable employment. I believe it was in the cabinet of Mr Jefferson that Mr Gallatin commenced his career as a statesman. Since then, much of his life has been passed either in high offices at home, or as minister to some of the European Courts; and the circumstance of his foreign birth rendering him ineligible to the office of President, this veteran statesman and diplomatist, wisely judging that there should be “some space between the *cabinet* and grave,” has retired from political life, and finds exercise for his yet unbroken energies in the calmer pursuits of literature.

In his youth Mr Gallatin must have been handsome. His countenance is expressive of great sagacity. He is evidently an acute thinker, and his conversation soon discovered him to be a ruthless exposer of those traditionary or *geographical* sophisms, in politics 70 and religion, by which the mind of whole nations has been frequently obscured, and from the influence of which, none perhaps are entirely exempt. Mr Gallatin speaks our language with a slight infusion of his native accent, but few have greater command of felicitous expression, or write it with greater purity.

An evening passed in such company, could not be other than delightful. There was no monopoly of conversation, and its current flowed on equably and agreeably. Subjects of literature and politics were discussed with an entire absence of that bigotry and

dogmatism, which sometimes destroy the pleasure of interchange of opinion, even between minds of high order. For myself, I was glad to enjoy an opportunity of observing the modes of thinking peculiar to intellects of the first class, in this new and interesting country, and I looked forward to nothing with more pleasure, than availing myself of the obliging invitation to repeat my visits at the future meetings of the Club.

Having already passed a fortnight in one unbroken chain of engagements in this most hospitable city, I determined to give variety to the tissue of my life, 71 by accepting the very kind and pressing invitation of Dr Hosack, to visit him at his country-seat on the banks of the Hudson. The various works of this gentleman have rendered his name well known in Europe, and procured his admission to the most eminent Philosophical Institutions in England, France, and Germany. For many years, he enjoyed as a physician the first practice in New York, and has recently retired from the toilsome labours of his profession, with the reputation of great wealth, and the warm esteem of his fellow-citizens.

At eight o'clock in the morning, therefore, of a day which promised to turn out more than usually raw and disagreeable, I embarked in the steam-boat North America, and proceeded up the river to Hyde-Park, about eighty miles distant. I had anticipated much enjoyment from the beautiful scenery on the Hudson, but the elements were adverse. We had scarcely left the quay, when the lowering clouds began to discharge their contents in the form of snow, and the wind was so piercingly cold that I found it impossible, even with all appliances of cloaks and great-coats, to remain long on deck. Every now and 72 then, however, I reascended, to see as much as I could, and when nearly half frozen, returned to enjoy the scarcely less interesting prospect of the cabin stove.

Of course, it was impossible, under such circumstances, to form any accurate estimate of scenery; but still the fine objects which appeared occasionally glimmering through the mist, were enough to convince me, that seen under more favourable auspices, my expectations, highly as they had been excited, were not likely to encounter disappointment. That portion of the scenery in particular, distinguished by the name of the Highlands, struck me, as

combining the elements of the grand and beautiful, in a very eminent degree. I remember nothing on the Rhine equal to it. The river at this place has found a passage through two ranges of mountains, evidently separated by some convulsion of nature, and which, in beauty and variety of form, can scarcely be exceeded.

But the vessel in which this little voyage was performed, demands some notice, even amid scenery fine as that through which it conducted us with astonishing rapidity. Its dimensions seemed gigantic. Being intended solely for river navigation, the bottom is 73 nearly flat, and the upper portion of the vessel is made to project beyond the hull to a very considerable distance on either side. When standing at the stern, and looking forward, the extent of accommodation appears enormous, though certainly not more than is required for the immense number of passengers who travel daily between New York and Albany. Among other unusual accommodations on deck, I was rather surprised at observing a barber's shop, in which—judging from the state of the visages of my fellow-passengers—I have no doubt that a very lucrative trade is carried on.

The accommodation below was scarcely less worthy of note. It consisted of two cabins, which I guessed by pacing them, to be an hundred and fifty feet in length. The sternmost of these spacious apartments is sumptuously fitted up with abundance of mirrors, ottomans, and other appurtenances of luxury. The other, almost equally large, was very inferior in point of decoration. It seemed intended for a sort of tippling-shop, and contained a *bar* , where liquors of all kinds, from champagne to small-beer, were dispensed to such passengers as have inclination to swallow, VOL. I. G 74 and money to pay for them. The sides of both these cabins were lined with a triple row of sleeping-berths; and as the sofas and benches were likewise convertible to a similar purpose, I was assured, accommodation could be easily furnished for about five hundred.

The scene at breakfast was a curiosity. I calculated the number oft masticators at about three hundred, yet there was no confusion, and certainly no scarcity of provision. As for the waiters, their name might have been *Legion* , for they were many, and during

the whole entertainment, kept skipping about with the most praiseworthy activity, some collecting money, and others engaged in the translation of cutlets and coffee. The proceedings of the party *in re* breakfast, were no less brief and compendious afloat, than I had observed them on shore. As for *eating* , there was nothing like it discoverable on board the North America. Each man seemed to *devour* , under the uncontrollable impulse of some sudden hurricane of appetite, to which it would be difficult to find any parallel beyond the limits of the Zoological Gardens. A few minutes did the business. The clatter of 75 knives and voices, vociferous at first, speedily waxed faint and fainter, plates, dishes, cups, and saucers, disappeared as if by magic, and everything connected with the meal became so suddenly invisible, that but for internal evidence, which the hardiest sceptic could scarcely have ventured to discredit, the breakfast in the North America might have passed for one of those gorgeous, but unreal visions, which, for a moment, mock the eye of the dreamer, and then vanish into thin air.

The steamer made several brief stoppages at villages on the river, for the reception and discharge of goods or passengers. From the large warehouses which these generally contained, they were evidently places of considerable deposit for the agricultural produce of the neighbouring country. They were built exclusively of wood, painted white, and, certainly, for their population, boasted an unusual number of taverns, which gave notice of their hospitality, on signboards of gigantic dimensions. The business to be transacted at these places occasioned but little loss of time. Every arrangement had evidently been made to facilitate despatch, and by two o'clock I found myself fairly ashore at Hyde Park, and glad to seek shelter 76 in the landing-house from the deluge of snow, which had already whitened the whole surface of the country.

I had just begun to question the landlord about the possibility of procuring a conveyance to the place of my destination, when Dr Hosack himself appeared, having obligingly brought his carriage for my conveyance. Though the drive from the landing-place led through a prettily variegated country, I was not much in the humour to admire scenery, and looked, I fear, with more indifference on the improvements past and projected, to which the Doctor

directed my attention, than would have been consistent with politeness in a warmer and more comfortable auditor. The distance, however, was little more than a mile, and, on reaching the house, the disagreeables of the journey were speedily forgotten in the society of its amiable inmates, and the enjoyment of every convenience which wealth and hospitality could supply.

Dr Hosack had received his professional education in Scotland, and passed a considerable portion of his early life there. I was fortunately enabled to afford him some information relative to the companions of 77 his early studies, several of whom have since risen to eminence, while others, perhaps not less meritorious, have lived and died undistinguished. In return, the Doctor was good enough to favour me, by communicating much valuable knowledge on the state of science and the arts in the United States, which I must have found great difficulty in obtaining from other sources.

There is this advantage in the pursuit of science, that it tends to generate liberality of sentiment, and destroy those prejudices which divide nations far more effectually than any barrier of nature. Science is of no country, and its followers, wherever born, constitute a wide and diffusive community, and are linked together by ties of brotherhood and interest, which political hostility cannot sever. These observations were particularly suggested by my intercourse with Dr Hosack. Though our conversation was excursive, and embraced a vast variety of topics fairly debateable between an American and an Englishman, I could really detect nothing of national prejudice in his opinions. He uniformly spoke of the great names of Europe with admiration and respect, and his allusions 78 to the achievements of his countrymen in arts, arms, science, or philosophy, betrayed nothing of that vanity and exaggeration, with which, since my arrival, I had already become somewhat familiar.

The following morning was bright and beautiful. The snow, except in places where the wind had drifted it into wreaths, had entirely disappeared; and after breakfast, I was glad to accept the invitation of my worthy host, to examine his demesne, which was really very beautiful and extensive. Nothing could be finer than the situation of the house. It stands

upon a lofty terrace, overhanging the Hudson, whose noble stream lends richness and grandeur to the whole extent of the foreground of the landscape. Above, its waters are seen to approach from a country finely variegated, but unmarked by any peculiar boldness of feature. Below, it is lost among a range of rocky and wooded eminences of highly picturesque outline. In one direction alone, however, is the prospect very extensive, and in that, (the north-west,) the Catskill Mountains, sending their bald and rugged summits far up into the sky, form a glorious framework for the picture.

79

We drove through a finely-undulating country, in which the glories of the ancient forest have been replaced by bare fields, intersected by hideous zigzag fences. God meant it to be beautiful when He gave such noble varieties of hill and plain, wood and water; but man seemed determined it should be otherwise. No beauty which the axe could remove was suffered to remain; and wherever the tide of population reached, the havoc had been indiscriminate and unsparing.

Yet, of this, it were not only useless, but ridiculous to complain. Such changes are not optional, but imperative. The progress of population necessarily involves them, and they must be regarded only as the process by which the wilderness is brought to minister to the wants and enjoyments of civilized man. The time at length comes, when another and a higher beauty takes place of that which has been destroyed. It is only the state of transition which it is unpleasant to behold; the particular stage of advancement in which the wild grandeur of nature has disappeared, and the charm of cultivation has not yet replaced it.

80

Dr Hosack was a farmer, and took great interest in the laudable, but costly amusement of improving his estate. He had imported sheep and cattle from England, of the most approved breeds, and in this respect promised to be a benefactor to his neighbourhood. I am not much of a farmer, and found the Doctor sagacious about long horns and short legs, in a degree which impressed me with a due consciousness of my ignorance. The farm

offices were extensive and well arranged, and contained some excellent horses. A pair of powerful carriage-horses, in particular, attracted my admiration. In this country these fine animals cost only two hundred dollars. In London, I am sure, that under Tattersall's hammer, they would not fetch less than three hundred guineas.

But America is not the place for a gentleman-farmer. The price of labour is high, and besides, it cannot always be commanded at any price. The condition of society is not ripe for farming on a great scale. There will probably be no American Mr Coke for some centuries to come. The Transatlantic Sir John Sinclairs are yet *in ovo* , and a long period of 81 incubation must intervene, before we can expect them to crack the shell. As things at present stand, small farmers could beat the great ones out of the field. What a man produces by his own labour, and that of his family, he produces cheaply. What he is compelled to hire others to perform, is done expensively. It is always the interest of the latter to get as much, and give as little labour in exchange for it as they can. Then arises the necessity of bailiffs and overseers, fresh mouths to be fed and pockets to be filled, and the owner may consider himself fortunate if these are content with devouring the profits, without swallowing the estate into the bargain.

Having passed two very pleasant days with my kind and hospitable friends, I again took steam on my return to New York. Dr Hosack was good enough to accompany me on board, and introduce me to a family of the neighbourhood, who were returning from their summer residence to pass the winter in the city. In its members, was included one of the most intelligent and accomplished ladies I have ever met in any country. The voyage, therefore, 82 did not appear tedious, though the greater part was performed in the dark. About ten o'clock the steam-boat was alongside the quay, and I speedily found myself installed in my old quarters in Bunker's hotel.

83

CHAPTER IV. NEW YORK.

Professor Griscomb, a member of the Society of Friends, was obliging enough to conduct me over a large Seminary placed under his immediate superintendence. The general plan of education is one with which, in Scotland at least, we are familiar, and I did not remark that any material improvement had followed its adoption in the United States. To divide boys into large classes of fifty or a hundred, in which, of course, the rate of advancement of the slowest boy must regulate that of the cleverest and most assiduous, does not, I confess, appear a system founded on very sound or rational principles. On this plan of retardation, it is, of course, necessary to discover some employment for the boys, whose talents 84 enable them to outstrip their fellows; and this is done by appointing them to the office of monitor, or teacher, of a subdivision of the class. This mode of communicating knowledge has its advantages and its faults. It is no doubt beneficial to the great body of the class, who are instructed with greater facility, and less labour to the master. But the monitors are little better than scapegoats, who, with some injustice, are made to pay the whole penalty of the comparative dulness of their companions. The system, however, I have been assured, both in this country and in England, is found to work well, and I have no doubt it does so in respect to the *average* amount of instruction imparted to the pupils. But the principle of sacrificing the clever few, for the advancement of the stupid many, is one, I still humbly conceive, to be liable to strong objections. Of establishments on this principle, I have seen none more successful than that of Professor Griscomb. Every thing which zeal and talent on the part of the master could effect, had obviously been done; and on the part of the scholars, there was assuredly no want of proficiency in any branch of knowledge adapted to their age and capacity.

85

A striking difference exists between the system of rewards and punishments adopted in the schools of the United States, and in those of England. In the former, neither personal infliction, nor forcible coercion of any kind, is permitted. How far such a system is likely to prove successful, I cannot yet form an opinion, but judging solely from the seminary under Dr Griscomb, I should be inclined to augur favourably of its results. It has always, however,

appeared strange to me, that the Americans should betray so strong an antipathy to the system of the public schools of England. There are no other establishments, perhaps, in our country, so entirely republican both in principle and practice. Rank is there allowed no privileges, and the only recognised aristocracy is that of personal qualities. Yet these schools are far from finding favour in American eyes. The system of fagging, in particular, is regarded with abhorrence; and since my arrival, I have never met any one who could even speak of it with patience. The state of feeling on this matter in the two countries presents this curious anomaly: A young English nobleman is sent to Westminster or Winchester to brush coats 86 and wash tea-cups, while the meanest American storekeeper would redden with virtuous indignation at the very thought of the issue of his loins contaminating his plebeian blood by the discharge of such functions.

This difference of feeling, however, seems to admit of easy explanation. In England, the menial offices in question form the duties of *freemen;* in America, even in those States where slavery has been abolished, domestic service being discharged by Negroes, is connected with a thousand degrading associations. So powerful are these, that I have never yet conversed with an American who could understand that there is nothing intrinsically disgraceful in such duties; and their being at all considered so, proceeds entirely from a certain confusion of thought, which connects the office with the manners and character of those by whom it is discharged. In a country where household services are generally performed by persons of respectable character, on a level, in point of morals and acquirement, with other handicraftsmen, it is evident that such prejudice could exist in no material degree. But it certainly could not exist *at all* in a country, where for a certain period such services were 87 performed by *all* , including every rank below royalty. Let the idea of personal degradation, therefore, be wholly abstracted, and then the question will rest on its true basis, namely, whether such discipline as that adopted in our public schools, be favourable to the improvement of the moral character or not?

In England, the system is believed from long experience to work practically well. No man will say, that British gentlemen, formed under the discipline of these institutions,

are deficient in high bearing, or in generous spirit; nor will it readily be considered a disadvantage, that those who are afterwards to wield the united influence of rank and wealth, should, in their early years, be placed in a situation, where their personal and moral qualities alone can place them even on an equality with their companions.

It is very probable, indeed, that a system suited to a country, in which gradation of ranks forms an integral part of the constitution, may not be adapted to another, which differs in these respects so widely as the United States. Here, there is no pride of birth or station to be overcome; and whether, under circumstances so different, the kind of discipline in 88 question might operate beneficially or otherwise, is a point on which I certainly do not presume to decide. I only assert my conviction, that in this country the question has never yet been made the subject of liberal and enlightened discussion, and therefore that the value of Transatlantic opinion with regard to it is absolutely nill. The conclusion adopted may be right, but the grounds on which it is founded are evidently wrong.

Having resolved to devote the day to the inspection of schools, I went from that under the superintendence of Professor Griscomb, to another for the education of children of colour. I here found about a hundred boys, in whose countenances might be traced every possible gradation of complexion between those of the swarthy Ethiop and florid European. Indeed, several of the children were so fair, that I certainly never should have discovered the lurking tint of African descent. In person they were clean and neat, and though of course the offspring of the very lowest class of the people, there was nothing in their dress or appearance indicative of abject poverty. The master struck me as an intelligent and benevolent man. He 89 frankly answered all my questions, and evidently took pride in the proficiency of his pupils.

It has often happened to me, since my arrival in this country, to hear it gravely maintained by men of education and intelligence, that the Negroes are an inferior race, a link as it were between man and the brutes. Having enjoyed few opportunities of observation on people of colour in my own country, I was now glad to be enabled to enlarge my

knowledge on a subject so interesting. I therefore requested the master to inform me whether the results of his experience had led to the inference, that the aptitude of the Negro children for acquiring knowledge was inferior to that of the whites. In reply, he assured me they had not done so; and, on the contrary, declared, that in sagacity, perseverance, and capacity for the acquisition and retention of knowledge, his poor despised scholars were equal to any boys he had ever known. “But alas, sir!” said he, “to what end are these poor creatures taught knowledge, from the exercise of which they are destined to be debarred, by the prejudices of society? It is surely but a cruel mockery to cultivate talents, when in the present VOL. I. H 90 state of public feeling, there is no field open for their useful employment. Be his acquirements what they may, a Negro is still a Negro, or, in other words, a creature marked out for degradation, and exclusion from those objects which stimulate the hopes and powers of other men.”

I observed, in reply, that I was not aware that, in those States in which slavery had been abolished, any such barrier existed as that to which he alluded. “In the State of New York, for instance,” I asked, “are not all offices and professions open to the man of colour as well as to the white?”

“I see, sir,” replied he, “that you are not a native of this country, or you would not have asked such a question.” He then went on to inform me, that the exclusion in question did not arise from any legislative enactment, but from the tyranny of that prejudice which, regarding the poor black as a being of inferior order, works its own fulfilment in making him so. There was no answering this, for it accorded too well with my own observations in society, not to carry my implicit belief.

The master then proceeded to explain the system 91 of education adopted in the school, and subsequently afforded many gratifying proofs of the proficiency of his scholars. One class were employed in navigation, and worked several complicated problems with great accuracy and rapidity. A large proportion were perfectly conversant with arithmetic, and not a few with the lower mathematics. A long and rigid examination took place in

geography, in the course of which questions were answered with facility, which I confess would have puzzled me exceedingly, had they been addressed to myself.

I had become so much interested in the little party-coloured crowd before me, that I recurred to our former discourse, and enquired of the master, what would probably become of his scholars on their being sent out into the world? Some trades—some description of labour of course were open to them, and I expressed my desire to know what these were. He told me they were few. The class studying navigation, were destined to be sailors; but whatever talent they might possess, it was impossible they could rise to be officers of the paltriest merchantman that entered the waters of the United States. The office of cook 92 or steward was indeed within the scope of their ambition; but it was just as feasible for the poor creatures to expect to become Chancellor of the State, as mate of a ship. In other pursuits it was the same. Some would become stone-masons, or bricklayers; and to the extent of carrying a hod, or handling a trowel, the course was clear before them; but the office of master-bricklayer was open to them in precisely the same sense as the Professorship of Natural Philosophy. No white artificer would serve under a coloured master. The most degraded Irish emigrant would scout the idea with indignation. As carpenters, shoemakers, or tailors, they were still arrested by the same barrier. In either of the latter capacities, indeed, they might work for people of their own complexion, but no *gentleman* would ever think of ordering garments of any sort from a *schneider* of cuticle less white than his own. Grocers they might be, but then who could conceive the possibility of a respectable household matron purchasing tea or spiceries from a vile “Nigger?” As barbers, they were more fortunate, and in that capacity might even enjoy the privilege of taking the President of the United States by 93 the nose. Throughout the Union, the department of domestic service peculiarly belongs to them, though recently they are beginning to find rivals in the Irish emigrants, who come annually in swarms like locusts.

On the whole, I cannot help considering it a mistake to suppose, that slavery has been abolished in the Northern States of the Union. It is true, indeed that in these States

the power of compulsory labou no longer exists; and that one human being within their limits, can no longer claim property in the thews and sinews of another. But is this all that is implied in the boon of freedom? If the word mean any thing, it must mean the enjoyment of equal rights, and the unfettered exercise in each individual of such powers and faculties as God has given him. In this true meaning of the word, it may be safely asserted, that this poor degraded caste are still slaves. They are subjected to the most grinding and humiliating of all slaveries, that of universal and unconquerable prejudice. The whip, indeed, has been removed from the back of the Negro, but the chains are still on his limbs, and he bears the brand of degradation on his forehead. What is it but mere abuse of language 94 to call him *free* , who is tyrannically deprived of all the motives to exertion which animate other men? The law, in truth, has left him in that most pitiable of all conditions, *a masterless slave.*

It cannot be denied, that the Negro population are still compelled, *as a class* , to be the hewers of wood, and drawers of water, to their fellow-citizens. *Citizens!* there is indeed something ludicrous in the application of the word to these miserable Pariahs. What privileges do they enjoy as such? Are they admissible upon a jury? Can they enrol themselves in the militia? Will a white man eat with them, or extend to them the hand of fellowship? Alas! if these men, so irresistibly manacled to degradation, are to be called *free* , tell us, at least, what stuff are slaves made of!

But on this subject, perhaps, another tone of expression—of thought, there can be no other—may be more judicious. I have already seen abundant proofs, that the prejudices against the coloured portion of the population, prevail to an extent, of which an Englishman could have formed no idea. But many enlightened men, I am convinced, are above 95 them. To these I would appeal. They have already begun the work of raising this unfortunate race from the almost brutal state to which tyranny and injustice had condemned it. But let them not content themselves with such delusive benefits as the extension of the right of suffrage, recently conferred by the Legislature of New York.* The opposition to be overcome, is not that of *law* , but of *opinion.* If in unison with the ministers

of religion, they will set their shoulders to the wheel, and combat prejudice with reason, ignorance with knowledge, and pharisaical assumption with the mild tenets of Christianity, they must succeed in infusing a better spirit into the minds and hearts of their countrymen. It is true, indeed, the victory will not be achieved in a day, nor probably in an age, but assuredly it will come at last. In achieving it, they will become the benefactors, not

* The Legislature of New York, in 1829, extended, the right of suffrage to men of colour, *possessed of a clear freehold estate, without encumbrance, of the value of* 250 *dollars.* A very safe concession no doubt, since to balance the *black interest*, the same right of suffrage was granted to *every* white male of twenty-one years, who has been one year in the state. It might be curious to know how many coloured voters became qualified by this enactment. They must indeed have been *rari nantes in gurgite vasto* of the election.

96 only of the Negro population, but of their fellow-citizens. They will give freedom to both; for the man is really not more free whose mind is shackled by degrading prejudice, than he who is its victim.

As illustrative of the present matter, I am tempted here to relate an anecdote, though somewhat out of place, as it did not occur till my return to New York in the following spring. Chancing one day at the ordinary at Bunker's, to sit next an English merchant from St Domingo; in the course of conversation, he mentioned the following circumstances. The son of a Haytian general, high in the favour of Boyer, recently accompanied him to New York, which he came to visit for pleasure and instruction. This young man, though a mulatto, was pleasing in manner, and with more intelligence than is usually to be met with in a country in which education is so defective. At home, he had been accustomed to receive all the deference due to his rank, and when he arrived in New York, it was with high anticipations of the pleasure that awaited him in a city so opulent and enlightened.

On landing, he enquired for the best hotel, and directed his baggage to be conveyed thither. He 2 97 was rudely refused admittance, and tried several others with similar result. At length he was forced to take up his abode in a miserable lodging-house kept by a Negro

woman. The pride of the young Haytian, (who, sooth to say, was something of a dandy, and made imposing display of gold chains and brooches,) was sadly galled by this, and the experience of every hour tended further to confirm the conviction, that, in this country, he was regarded as a degraded being, with whom the meanest white man would hold it disgraceful to associate. In the evening he went to the theatre, and tendered his money to the box-keeper. It was tossed back to him, with a disdainful intimation, that the place for persons of his colour was the upper gallery.

On the following morning, my countryman, who had frequently been a guest at the table of his father, paid him a visit. He found the young Haytian in despair. All his dreams of pleasure were gone, and he returned to his native island by the first conveyance, to visit the United States no more.

This young man should have gone to Europe. Should he visit England, he may feel quite secure, VOL. I. I 98 that if he have money in his pocket, he will offer himself at no hotel, from Land's End to John O'Groat's house, where he will not meet a very cordial reception. Churches, theatres, operas, concerts, coaches, chariots, cabs, vans, waggons, steam-boats, railway carriages and air ballons, will all be open to him as the daylight. He may repose on cushions of down or of air, he may charm his ear with music, and his palate with luxuries of all sorts. He may travel *en prince* or *en roturier* , precisely as his fancy dictates, and may enjoy even the honours of a crowned head, if he will only pay like one. In short, so long as he carries certain golden ballast about with him, all will go well. But when that is done, God help him. He will then become familiar with the provisions of the vagrant act, and Mr Roe or Mr Ballantine will recommend exercise on the treadmill, for the benefit of his constitution. Let him but show his nose abroad, and a whole host of parish overseers will take alarm. The new police will bait him like a bull; and should he dare approach even the lowest eating-house, the master will shut the door in his face. If he beg charity, he will be told to work. If 99 he ask for work, he will be told to get about his business. If he steal, he will be found a free passage to Botany Bay, and be dressed gratis on his arrival, in an elegant suit of yellow. If he rob, he will be found a free passage to another world, in which,

as there is no paying or receiving in payment, we may hope that his troubles will be at an end for ever.

100

CHAPTER V. NEW YORK.

Having moved, since my arrival, in a tolerably wide circle, I now feel qualified to offer some observations on the state of society in New York. The houses of the better order of citizens, are generally of brick, sometimes faced with stone or marble, and in the allotment of the interior, very similar to tenements of the same class in England. The dining and drawingrooms are uniformly on the ground floor, and communicate by folding doors, which, when dinner is announced, are thrown open for the transit of the company. The former of these apartments, so far as my observation has carried me, differs nothing in appearance from an English one. But the drawingrooms in New York certainly strike me as 101 being a good deal more primitive in their appliances, than those of the more opulent classes in the old country. Furniture in the United States is apparently not one of those articles in which wealth takes pride in displaying its superiority. Every thing is comfortable, but every thing is plain. Here are no buhl tables, nor or-molu clocks, nor gigantic mirrors, nor cabinets of Japan, nor draperies of silk or velvet; and one certainly does miss those thousand elegancies, with which the taste of British ladies delights in adorning their apartments. In short, the appearance of an American mansion is decidedly republican. No want remains unsupplied, while nothing is done for the gratification of a taste for expensive luxury.

This is as it should be. There are few instances of such opulence in America as would enable its owner, without inconvenience, to lavish thousands on pictures, ottomans, and china vases. In such a country, there are means of profitable outlay for every shilling of accumulated capital, and the Americans are too prudent a people to invest in objects of mere taste, that which, in the more vulgar shape of cotton or tobacco, would tend to the replenishing of their pockets. 102 And, after all, it is better, perhaps, to sit on leather or

cotton, with a comfortable balance at one's banker's book, than to lounge on damask, and tread on carpets of Persia, puzzling our brains about the budget and the ways and means.

One cause of the effect just noticed, is unquestionably the absence of the law, or rather the custom of primogeniture. A man whose fortune, at his death, must be divided among a numerous family in equal proportions, will not readily invest any considerable portion of it, in such inconvertible objects as the productions of the fine arts, and still less in articles of mere household luxury, unsuited to the circumstances of his descendants. It will rarely happen that a father can bequeath to each of his children enough to render them independent. They have to struggle into opulence as best they may; and assuredly, to men so circumstanced, nothing could be more inconvenient and distasteful, than to receive any part of their legacies, in the form of pictures, or scagliola tables, instead of Erie canal shares, or bills of the New York bank.

Another circumstance, probably not without its 103 effect in recommending both paucity and plainness of furniture, is the badness of the servants. These are chiefly people of colour, habituated from their cradle to be regarded as an inferior race, and consequently sadly wanting both in moral energy and principle. Every lady with whom I have conversed on the subject, speaks with envy of the superior comforts and facilities of an English establishment. A coloured servant, they declare, requires perpetual supervision. He is an executive, not a deliberative being. Under such circumstances the drudgery that devolves on an American matron, I should imagine to be excessive. She must direct every operation that is going on from the garret to the cellar. She must be her own housekeeper; superintend all the outgoings and comings in, and interfere in a thousand petty and annoying details, which, in England, go on like clock-work, out of sight and out of thought.

If it fare so with the mistress of an establishment, the master has no sinecure. A butler is out of the question. He would much rather know that the keys of his cellar were at the bottom of the Hudson, than in the pocket of black Cæsar, with a fair opportunity 104 of getting at his *Marston* or his *Bingham.* Few of the coloured population have energy to

resist temptation. The dread of punishment has been removed as an habitual motive to exertion, but the sense of inextinguishable degradation yet remains.

The torment of such servants has induced many families in New York to discard them altogether, and supply their places with natives of the Emerald Isle. It may be doubted, whether the change has generally been accompanied by much advantage. Domestic service in the United States, is considered as degrading by all untainted with the curse of African descent. No native American could be induced to it, and popular as the present President may be, he would probably not find one of his constituents, who, for any amount of emolument, would consent to brush his coat, or stand behind his carriage. On their arrival in this country, therefore, the Scotch and English, who are not partial to being looked down upon by their neighbours, very soon get hold of this prejudice; but he of that terrestrial paradise, “first flower of the earth, and first gem of the sea,” has no such scruples. Landing often at the quay of New York, without 105 hat, shoes, and sometimes less dispensable garments, he is content to put his pride in his pocket, where there is always ample room for its accommodation. But even with him domestic service is only a temporary expedient. The moment he contrives to scrape together a little money, he bids his master good-morning, and, fired with the ambition of farming or store-keeping, starts off for the back country.

The nuisance of this is, that no white servant is ever stationary in a place. He comes a mere clodpole, and is no sooner taught his duty, and become an useful member of the house, than he accepts the Chiltern Hundreds, and a new writ must forthwith be issued for a tenant of the pantry. Now, though annual elections may be very good things in the body *politic* , the most democratic American will probably admit, that in the body *domestic* , the longer the members keep their seats the better. Habits of office are of some value in a valet, as well as in a secretary of state, and how these are to be obtained by either functionary, as matters are at present ordered in this country, I profess myself at a loss to understand.

When you enter an American house, either in quality 106 of casual visitor or invited guest, the servant never thinks of ushering you to the company; on the contrary, he immediately disappears, leaving you to explore your way, in a navigation of which you know nothing, or to amuse yourself in the passage by counting the hat-pegs and umbrellas. In the house of a stranger, one cannot take the liberty of bawling for assistance, and the choice only remains of opening doors on speculation, with the imminent risk of intruding on the bedroom of some young lady, or of cutting the gordian knot by escaping through the only one you know any thing about. I confess, that the first time I found myself in this unpleasant predicament, the latter expedient was the one I adopted, though I fear not without offence to an excellent family, who, having learned the fact of my admission, could not be supposed to understand the motive of my precipitate retreat.

On the whole, the difference is not striking, I should imagine, between the social habits of the people of New York, and those prevalent in our first-rate mercantile cities. In both, the faculties are exerted in the same pursuits; in both, the dominant aristocracy 107 is that of wealth; and in both, there is the same grasping at unsubstantial and unacknowledged distinctions.

It is the fashion to call the United States the land of liberty and equality. If the term equality be understood simply as implying, that there exists no privileged order in America, the assertion, though not strictly true,* may pass. In any wider acceptation it is mere nonsense. There is quite as much practical equality in Liverpool as New York. The magnates of the Exchange do not strut less proudly in the latter city than in the former; nor are their wives and daughters more backward in supporting their pretensions. In such matters legislative enactments can do nothing. Man's vanity, and the desire of distinction inherent in his nature, cannot be repressed. If obstructed in one outlet, it will only gush forth with greater vehemence at another. The most contemptible of mankind has some talent of mind or body,—some attraction—virtue—accomplishment—dexterity—or gift of fortune,—in short, something real or imaginary,

* Not strictly true, because in some of the States the right of suffrage is made dependent on a certain qualification in property. In Virginia, in particular, this qualification is very high.

108 on which he arrogates superiority to those around him. The rich man looks down upon the poor, the learned on the ignorant, the orator on him unblessed with the gift of tongues, and “he that is a true-born gentleman, and stands upon the honour of his birth,” despises the plebeian, whose talents have raised him to an estimation in society perhaps superior to his own.

Thus it is with the men, and with the fairer sex assuredly it is not different. No woman, conscious of attraction, was ever a republican in her heart. Beauty is essentially despotic —it uniformly asserts its power, and never yet consented to a surrender of privilege. I have certainly heard it maintained in the United States, that all men were equal, but never did I hear that assertion from the lips of a lady. On the contrary, the latter is always conscious of the full extent of her claims to preference and admiration, and is never satisfied till she feels them to be acknowledged. And what zephyr is too light to fill the gossamer sails of woman's vanity! The form of a feature,—the whiteness of a hand,—the shade of a ringlet,—a cap,—a feather,—a trinket,—a smile,—a 109 motion,—all, or any of these, or distinctions yet finer and more shadowy, if such there be,—are enough, here as elsewhere, to constitute the sign and shibboleth of her fantastic supremacy. It is in vain, therefore, to talk of female republicans; there exists, and can exist, no such being on either side of the Atlantic, for human nature is the same on both.

In truth, the spirit of aristocracy displays itself in this commercial community in every variety of form. One encounters it at every turn. T'other night, at a ball, I had the honour to converse a good deal with a lady, who is confessedly a star of the first magnitude in the hemisphere of fashion. She enquired what I thought of the company. I answered, “that I had rarely seen a party in any country in which the average of beauty appeared to me to be so high.”

“Indeed!” answered my fair companion, with an expression of surprise; “it would seem that you English gentlemen are not difficult to please; but does it strike you, that the average is equally high as regards air, manner, fashion?”

“In regard to such matters,” I replied, “I certainly could not claim for the party in question any 110 remarkable distinction; but that, in a scene so animated, and brilliant with youth, beauty, and gaiety of spirit, I was little disposed to play the critic.”

“Nay,” replied my opponent,—for the conversation had already begun to assume something of the form of argument,—“it surely requires no spirit of rigid criticism, to discriminate between such a set of vulgarians, as you see collected here, and ladies who have been accustomed to move in a higher and better circle. Mrs—is an odd person, and makes it a point to bring together at her balls all the riff-raff of the place—people whom, if you were to remain ten years in New York, you would probably never meet anywhere else. I assure you, there are not a dozen girls in this room that I should think of admitting to my own parties.”

Thus driven from the field, I ventured to direct her notice to several elegant and pretty girls, about whom I asked some questions. Their attractions, however, were either not admitted, or when these were too decided to allow of direct negation, the subject was ingeniously evaded. If I talked of a pretty foot, I was told its owner was the daughter of a tobacconist. 111 If I admired a graceful dancer, I was assured (what I certainly should not have discovered) that the young lady was of vulgar manners, and without education. Some were so utterly unknown to fame, that their very names, birth, habits, and connexions, were buried in the most impenetrable obscurity. In short, a Count of the Empire, with his sixteen quarterings, probably would not have thought, and certainly would not have spoken, with contempt half so virulent of these fair plebeians. The reader will perhaps agree, that there are more *exclusives* in the world than the lady-patronesses of Almack's.

I shall now give an instance of the estimation in which wealth is held in this commercial community. At a party, a few evenings ago, the worthy host was politely assiduous in introducing me to the more prominent individuals who composed it. Unfortunately, he considered it necessary to preface each repetition of the ceremony with some preliminary account of the pecuniary circumstances of the gentlemen, the honour of whose acquaintance was about to be conferred on me. “Do you observe,” he asked, “that tall thin person, with a cast in his eye, and his nose a little 112 cocked? Well, that man, not three months ago, made an hundred thousand dollars by a single speculation in tallow. You must allow me to introduce you to him.”

The introduction passed, and my zealous cicerone again approached, with increased importance of aspect—“A gentleman,” he said, “worth at least half a million, had expressed a desire to make my acquaintance.” This was gratifying, and, of course, not to be denied. A third time did our worthy entertainer return to the charge; and before taking my departure, I had the honour of being introduced to an individual, who was stated to be still more opulent than his predecessors. Had I been presented to so many bags of dollars, instead of to their possessors, the ceremony would have been quite as interesting, and perhaps less troublesome.

The truth is, that in a population wholly devoted to money-getting, the respect paid to wealth is so pervadingly diffused, that it rarely occurred to any one, that it was impossible I should feel the slightest interest in the private circumstances of the gentlemen with whom I might chance to form a transient 113 acquaintance. It is far from my intention, however, to assert, that many of the travelled and more intelligent order of Americans could be guilty of such *sottises* as that to which I have alluded. But it is unquestionably true, that the tone of conversation, even in the best circles, is materially lowered by the degree in which it is engrossed by money and its various interests. Since my arrival, I have received much involuntary instruction in the prices of corn, cotton, and tobacco. I am already well informed as to the reputed pecuniary resources of every gentleman of my acquaintance,

and the annual amount of his disbursements. My stock of information as to bankruptcies and dividends is very respectable; and if the manufacturers of Glasgow and Paisley knew only half as well as I do, how thoroughly the New York market is glutted with their goods, they assuredly would send out no more on speculation.

The usual dinner hour at New York is three o'clock; and as the gentlemen almost uniformly return to the discharge of business in the evening, it may be presumed that dinner parties are neither convenient to the entertainer nor the guests. Though not uncommon, VOL. 1. K 114 therefore, they are certainly less frequent than among individuals of the same class in England. This circumstance has, perhaps, wrought some change in their character, and deprived them of that appearance of easy and habitual hospitality, for the absence of which, additional splendour or profusion can afford but imperfect compensation. When a dinner party is made in this country, it is always on a great scale. Earth, and air, and ocean, are ransacked for their products. The whole habits of the family are deranged. The usual period of the meal is postponed for several hours; and considering the materials of which an American *ménage* is composed, it is not difficult to conceive the bustle and confusion participated by each member of the establishment, from Peter, the saffron-coloured groom of the chambers, to Silvia, the black kitchen wench.

In the ordinary routine, therefore, of American intercourse, visiting seldom commences till the evening, when the wealthier members of the community generally open their houses for the reception of company. Of this hospitable arrangement I have frequently taken advantage, On such occasions little ceremony 115 is observed. Each guest enters and departs when he thinks proper, without apology or explanation. Music and conversation are the usual entertainments—some slight refection is handed round, and before midnight the party has broken up.

This facility of intercourse is both pleasant and convenient to a stranger like myself. It affords valuable opportunities for the observation of manners; and it is pleasing to be

admitted within the charmed circle, which many of my predecessors have found it difficult, if not impossible, to overpass.

The formalities of a New York dinner do not differ much from those of an English one. Unfortunately, it is not here the fashion to invite the fairer part of creation to entertainments so gross and substantial; and it rarely happens that any ladies are present on such occasions, except those belonging to the family of the host. The party, however, is always enlivened by their presence at the tea-table; and then comes music, and perhaps dancing; while those who, like myself, are disqualified for active participation in such festivities, talk with an air of grave authority, of revolutions in Europe, the prospects of war or peace, 116 Parliamentary Reform, and other high and interesting matters.

Before dinner, the conversation of the company assembled in the drawingroom is here, as elsewhere, generally languid enough; but a change suddenly comes over the spirit of their dream. The folding-doors which communicate with the diningroom are thrown open, and all paradise is at once let in on the soul of a gourmand. The table, instead of displaying, as with us, a mere beggarly account of fish and soup, exhibits an array of dishes wedged in close column, which it would require at least an acre of mahogany to deploy into line. Plate, it is true, does not contribute much to the splendour of the prospect, but there is quite enough for comfort, though not perhaps for display. The lady of the mansion is handed in form to her seat, and the entertainment begins. The domestics, black, white, snuff-coloured, and nankeen, are in motion; plates vanish and reappear as if by magic; turtle, cold-blooded by nature, has become hot as Sir Charles Wetherell, and certainly never moved so rapidly before. The flight of ham and turkey is incessant; venison bounds from one end of 117 the table to the other, with a velocity scarcely exceeded in its native forest; and the energies of twenty human beings are all evidently concentrated in one common occupation.

During soup and fish, and perhaps the first slice of the haunch, conversation languishes, but a glass or two of Champagne soon operates as a corrective. The eyes of the young

ladies become more brilliant, and those of elderly gentlemen acquire a certain benevolent twinkle, which indicates, that for the time being they are in charity with themselves and all mankind.

At length the first course is removed, and is succeeded by a whole wilderness of sweets. This, too, passes, for it is impossible, alas! to eat for ever. Then come cheese and the dessert; then the departure of the ladies; and Claret and Madeira for an hour or twain are unquestioned lords of the ascendent.

The latter is almost uniformly excellent. I have never drunk any Madeira in Europe at all equalling what I have frequently met in the United States. *Gourmets* attribute this superiority partly to climate, but in a great measure to management. Madeira, in 118 this country, is never kept, as with us, in a subterranean vault, where the temperature throughout the year is nearly equal. It is placed in the attics, where it is exposed to the whole fervour of the summer's heat, and the severity of winter's cold. The effect on the flavour of the wine is certainly remarkable.

The Claret is generally good, but not better than in England; Port is used by the natives only as a medicine, and is rarely produced at table except in compliment to some English stranger, it being a settled canon, here as elsewhere, that every Englishman drinks Port. I have never yet tasted fine Sherry, probably because that wine has not yet risen into esteem in the United States.

The gentlemen in America pique themselves on their discrimination in wine, in a degree which is not common in England. The ladies have no sooner risen from table, than the business of winebibbing commences in good earnest. The servants still remain in the apartment, and supply fresh glasses to the guests as the successive bottles make their appearance. To each of these a history is attached, and the vintage, the date of importation, &c., are all duly detailed. 119 Then come the criticisms of the company, and as each bottle produced contains wine of a different quality from its predecessor, there

is no chance of the topic being exhausted. At length, having made the complete tour of the cellar, proceeding progressively from the commoner wines to those of finest flavour, the party adjourns to the drawingroom, and, after coffee, each guest takes his departure without ceremony of any kind.

It would be most ungrateful were I not to declare, that I have frequently found these dinner parties extremely pleasant. I admit that there is a plainness and even bluntness in American manners, somewhat startling at first to a sophisticated European. Questions are asked with regard to one's habits, family, pursuits, connexions, and circumstances, which are never put in England, except in a witness box, after the ceremony of swearing on the four Evangelists. But this is done with the most perfect *bonhommie* , and evidently without the smallest conception, that such examination can possibly be offensive to the patient. It is scarcely fair to judge one nation by the conventional standard of another; and travellers who 120 are tolerant enough of the peculiarities of their continental neighbours, ought in justice, perhaps, to make more allowance than they have yet done, for those of Brother Jonathan. Such questions, no doubt, would be sheer impertinence in an Englishman, because, in putting them, he could not but be aware, that he was violating the established courtesies of society. They are not so in an American, because he has been brought up with different ideas, and under a social *régime* more tolerant of individual curiosity, than is held in Europe to be compatible with good manners. Yet after all, it must be owned, that it is not always pleasant to feel yourself the object of a scrutiny, often somewhat coarsely conducted, and generally too apparent to be mistaken. I do assert, however, that in no other country I have ever visited, are the charities of life so readily and so profusely opened to a stranger as in the United States. In no other country will he receive attentions so perfectly disinterested and benevolent; and in none, when he seeks acquaintances, is it so probable that he will find friends.

It has been often said,—indeed said so often as to have passed into a popular apophthegm, that a strong 5 121 prejudice against Englishmen exists in America. Looking back on the whole course of my experience in that country, I now declare, that no

assertion more utterly adverse to truth, was ever palmed by malevolence or ignorance, on vulgar credulity. That a prejudice exists, I admit, but instead of being *against* Englishmen, as compared with the natives of other countries, it is a prejudice in *their favour.* The Americans do not weigh the merits of their foreign visitors in an equal balance. They are only too apt to throw their own partialities into the scale of the Englishman, and give it a preponderance to which the claims of the individual have probably no pretensions.

I beg, however, to be understood. Of the vast multitude of English whom the extensive commercial intercourse between the countries draws to the United States, few, indeed, are persons of liberal acquirement, or who have been accustomed to mix in good society in their own country. Coming to the United States or the pursuits of business, they are, of course, left to the attentions of those gentlemen with whom their professional relations bring them more particularly in VOL. I. L 122 contact. Admitting, for argument's sake, that all those persons were entirely unexceptionable both in manners and morals, their mere number, which is very great, would, in itself, operate as an exclusion. That they are hospitably received, I have no doubt, nor have I any that they meet with every attention and facility which commercial men can expect in a commercial community.

But when an English gentleman, actuated by motives of liberal curiosity, visits the United States, he is received in a different manner, and with very different feeling. Once assured of his respectability, he is admitted freely into society, and I again assert that he will meet a benevolent interest in promoting his views, which a traveller may in vain look for in other countries. I should be wrong in saying, however, that all this takes place without some scrutiny, both of character and deportment. Of whatever solecisms they are themselves guilty, the Americans are admirable,—and, perhaps, not very lenient,—judges of manners in others. They are quite aware of high breeding when they see it, and draw conclusions with regard to the pretensions of their visitors from a thousand 123 circumstances apparent only to very acute observation. With them vulgar audacity will not pass for polished ease; nor will fashionable exterior be received for more than it is worth. In short, I know of no country in which an impostor would have a more difficult game to

play in the prosecution of his craft, and should consider him an accomplished deceiver, were he successful in escaping detection amid observation so vigilant and acute.

In admitting that the standard of manners in the United States is somewhat lower than in England, I wish to be understood as speaking exclusively of the higher circles in the latter country. I am not aware, that bating a few peculiarities, the manners of the first-rate merchants of New York, are at all inferior to those either of Liverpool or any other of our great commercial cities. I am certain that they are not inferior to any merchants in the world, in extent of practical information, in liberality of sentiment, and generosity of character. Most of them have been in England, and from actual observation have formed opinions with regard to our national character and advantages, very different from the crude and ignorant 124 notions, which, I must say, are entertained by the great body of their countrymen. Were it admissible to form general conclusions of the American character, from that of the best circle in the greater Atlantic cities of the Union, the estimate would be high indeed.

Unfortunately, however, the conclusions drawn from premises so narrow, would be sadly erroneous. The preceding observations are applicable only to a very small portion of the population, composed almost entirely of the first-rate merchants and lawyers. Beyond that, there is a sad change for the worse. Neither in the manners nor in the morals of the great body of traders, is there much to draw approbation from an impartial observer. Comparing them with the same classes in England, one cannot but be struck with a certain resolute and obtrusive cupidity of gain, and a laxity of principle as to the means of acquiring it, which I should be sorry to believe formed any part of the character of my countrymen. I have heard conduct praised in conversation at a public table, which in England would be attended, if not with a voyage to Botany Bay, at least with total loss of character. 125 It is impossible to pass an hour in the bar of the hotel, without being struck with the tone of callous selfishness which pervades the conversation, and the absence of all pretension to pure and lofty principle. The only restraint upon these men is the law, and he is evidently

considered the most skilful in his vocation, who contrives to overreach his neighbour, without incurring its penalties.

It may probably be urged, that in drawing these harsh conclusions, I judge ignorantly, since, having no professional connexion with trade or traders, I cannot be supposed to know from experience any thing of the actual character of their commercial transactions. To this I reply, that my judgment has been formed on much higher grounds than the experience of any individual could possibly afford. If I am cheated in an affair of business, I can appeal but to a single case of fraud. I can only assert, that a circumstance has happened in America, which might have happened in any country of Europe. But when a man publicly confesses an act of fraud, or applauds it in another, two conclusions are fairly deducible. First, that the narrator is a person of little principle; and, second, 126 that he believes his audience to be no better than himself. Assuredly, no man will confess any thing, which he imagines may, by possibility, expose him to contempt; and the legitimate deduction from such details extends not only to the narrator of the anecdote, but to the company who received it without sign of moral indignation.

It may be well, however, to explain, that my observations have by no means been exclusively confined to the population of New York. The company in a hotel, is generally composed of persons from all States in the Union; and it may be, that the standard of probity is somewhat higher in this opulent and commercial city, than in the poorer and more remote settlements. For the last three weeks I have been daily thrown into the company of about an hundred individuals, fortuitously collected. A considerable portion of these are daily changing, and it is perhaps not too much to assume that, as a whole, they afford a fair average specimen of their class. Without, therefore, wishing to lead the reader to any hasty or exaggerated conclusion, I must in candour state, that the result of my observations has been to lower considerably 127 the high estimate I had formed of the moral character of the American people.

Though I have unquestionably met in New York with many most intelligent and accomplished gentlemen, still I think the fact cannot be denied, that the average of acquirement resulting from education is a good deal lower in this country than in the better circles of England. In all the knowledge which must be taught, and which requires laborious study for its attainment, I should say the Americans are considerably inferior to my countrymen. In that knowledge, on the other hand, which the individual acquires for himself by actual observation, which bears an immediate marketable value, and is directly available in the ordinary avocations of life, I do not imagine the Americans are excelled by any people in the world. They are consequently better fitted for analytic than synthetic reasoning. In the former process they are frequently successful. In the latter, their failure sometimes approaches to the ludicrous.

Another result of this condition of intelligence is, that the tone even of the best conversation is pitched in a lower key than in England. The speakers evidently 128 presume on an inferior degree of acquirement in their audience, and frequently deem it necessary to advance deliberate proof of matters, which in the old country would be taken for granted. There is certainly less of what may be called floating intellect in conversation. First principles are laboriously established, and long trains of reasoning terminate, not in paradox, but in commonplace. In short, whatever it is the obvious and immediate interest of Americans to know, is fully understood. Whatever is available rather in the general elevation of the intellect, than in the promotion of individual ambition, engrosses but a small share of the public attention.

In the United States one is struck with the fact, that there exist certain doctrines and opinions which have descended like heirlooms from generation to generation, and seem to form the subject of a sort of national entail, most felicitously contrived to check the natural tendency to intellectual advancement in the inheritors. The sons succeed to these opinions of their father, precisely as they do to his silver salvers, or gold-headed cane; and thus do certain dogmas, political and religious, gradually acquire a sort 129 of prescriptive

authority, and continue to be handed down, unsubjected to the test of philosophical examination. It is at least partially attributable to this cause, that the Americans are given to deal somewhat too extensively in broad and sweeping aphorisms. The most difficult problems of legislation are here treated as matters on which it were an insult on the understanding of a schoolboy, to suppose that he could entertain a doubt. Enquire their reasons for the inbred faith, of which they are the dark, though vehement apostles, and you get nothing but a few shallow truisms, which absolutely afford no footing for the conclusions they are brought forward to establish. The Americans seem to imagine themselves imbued with the power of *feeling* truth, or, rather, of getting at it by intuition, for by no other process can I yet discover that they attempt its attainment. With the commoner and more vulgar truths, indeed, I should almost pronounce them too plentifully stocked, since in these, they seem to imagine, is contained the whole valuable essence of human knowledge. It is unquestionable, that this character of mind is most unfavourable to national advancement; yet it is 130 too prominent not to find a place among the features which distinguish the American intellect, from that of any other people with whom it has been my fortune to become acquainted.

To-morrow it is my intention to proceed to Boston; I shall leave the public establishments, &c. of New York unvisited till my return; being anxious, during the first period of my residence, to confine my attention to the more prominent and general features which distinguish this interesting community.

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CHAPTER VI. VOYAGE—PROVIDENCE—BOSTON.

At four o'clock P. M., on the 8th of December, I embarked on board the steam-boat Chancellor Livingstone, and in a few minutes the vessel was under weigh. Her course lay up the East River, and along the channel which divides Long Island from the mainland. I had heard much of a certain dangerous strait, called Hell Gate, formed by the projection of huge masses of rock, which obstruct the passage of the river, and diverting the natural

course of the current, send its waters spinning round in formidable eddies and whirlpools. At high water—as it happened to be when we passed it—this said portal had no very frightful aspect. The stream was rapid, to be sure, but a double engine of ninety horse power, was more 132 than a match for it; and the Chancellor, in spite of its terrors, held on his course rejoicing, with little apparent diminution of velocity. Vessels, however, have been wrecked here, and a canal is spoken of, by which its dangers may be avoided.

The accommodations on board were such, as to leave the most querulous traveller no excuse for grumbling. The cabin, to be sure, with two huge red-hot stoves in it, was of a temperature which a salamander must have admired exceedingly, but the atmosphere, composed of the discarded breath of about an hundred passengers, still retained a sufficient portion of oxygen to support life. The hour of tea came, and all the appetite on board was mustered on the occasion. The meal passed speedily as heart could desire; but the mingled odour of fish, onions, and grease, was somewhat more permanent. Whether it improved the atmosphere, or not, is a point which I could not settle to my own satisfaction at the time, and must now, I fear, remain for ever undecided.

It was impossible, in such circumstances, to think of bed. The very thought of blankets was distressing. I had no book; and as for conversation, I could 133 hear none in which I was at all qualified to bear a part. I therefore ordered my writing-box, adjusted a new Bramah, and of the words that flowed from it, he that has read the preceding pages is already in possession.

If I wrote in bad humour, there was really some excuse for it. Close to my right were two loud polemics, engaged in fierce dispute on the Tariff bill. On my left was an elderly gentleman, without shoes or slippers, whose cough and expectoration were somewhat less melodious than the music of the spheres. In the berth immediately behind, lay a passenger, whose loud snoring proclaimed him as happy as a complete oblivion of all worldly cares could make him. Right opposite was a gentleman without breeches, who, before jumping into bed, was detailing to a friend the particulars of a lucky hit he had just

made in a speculation in train oil. And beside me, at the table, sat a Baptist clergyman, reading, *sotto voce* , a chapter of Ezekiel, and casting, at the conclusion of each verse, a glance of furtive curiosity at my paper.

It may be admitted, that such are not the items which go to the compounding of a paradise. But the 134 enjoyment of travelling, like other pleasures, must be purchased at some little expense; and he whose good-humour can be ruffled by every petty inconvenience he may chance to encounter, had unquestionably better remain at home. I beg it therefore to be understood, that in detailing the petty and transient annoyances connected with my journey, I do so, not as matters by which my tranquillity was materially affected, but as delineations naturally belonging to a picture of society, and without which it would be incomplete. A tourist in the United States will find no occasion for the ardour, the perseverance, or the iron constitution of a Lander; and yet he will do well to remember, that travellers, like players at bowls, must occasionally expect rubbers.

But I have dwelt too much on the disagreeables of the voyage, without giving the *per contra* side of the account. There was a fair breeze and a smooth sea; and an Irish steward, who was particularly active in my behalf, and made my berth very comfortable, by the fraudulent abstraction of sundry pillows from those of my American neighbours. This he has done—he told my servant so—because I am from the old country; 135 and yet one would suppose, that on such a man the claim of mere national affinity could have little influence. I talked a good deal with him about his former circumstances, and soon collected, that what is called *living* in Ireland, is usually entitled *starving* in other countries. Though rather chary of confession, I gathered, too, that the world was not his friend, nor the world's laws, in short, that he came to the United States to avoid a gaol, and without a shilling in his pocket. The day on which he left Ireland should be marked in his annals with a white stone. He now enjoys a comfortable situation—confesses he can save money—eats and drinks well—is encased in warm clothing—is troubled very little with the tax-gatherer, and not at all with the tithe-proctor. And what is there in the countenance of an Englishman, that it should excite in such a man the feeling of benevolence and kindred?

In his memory, one would suppose, the past would be linked only with suffering, while the present is undoubtedly associated with the experience of a thousand comforts, to which, in his days of vassalage and white-boyism, his imagination never ventured to soar. Yet, believe the man, and he regrets 136 having left home! He thinks he could have done as well in Ireland. He has no fault to find with America—it is a good country enough, for a poor man. Whisky is cheaper here, and so is bread and *mate;* but then his *ould* mother —and his sisters—and Tim Regan, he would like to see them again; and, please God, if he ever can afford it, he will return, and have his bones laid in the same churchyard with theirs.

But if Pat ever get back to Ireland, I venture to prophesy that his stay will not be long there. At present, his former privations are more than half-forgotten; but let him once again encounter them, and the difference between the country of his birth and that of his adoption, will become more apparent than argument could now make it. On the whole, it was pleasing to observe, that while time and distance obliterate the misfortunes of life, their tendency is to strengthen its charities.

On the following morning, about eleven o'clock, we reached Providence, and found eight or ten stagecoaches waiting on the quay to convey the passengers to Boston. Though I carried letters of introduction to several gentlemen in Providence, it had not been 137 my intention to remain there, and I had, accordingly, before landing, secured places in one of these vehicles. But in the hurry and bustle of scrambling for seats and coaches, and with the sight of eight large human beings already cooped up in that by which I must have travelled, I began to waver in my resolution, and at length resolved to sacrifice the money I had paid, and take the chances of better accommodation, and a more agreeable party, on the day following. Besides, the weather was raw and gusty, and I had been drenched from the knee downward in wading through the masses of half-melted snow, which covered the landing-place. The idea, therefore, of a comfortable Providence hotel, naturally found more

favour in my imagination, than an eight hours' journey to Boston, in such weather, such company, and such conveyance as I could reasonably anticipate.

On reaching the hostelry, however, its external appearance was far from captivating. There was no signboard; nor did the house display any external symbol of the hospitality within. Below was a range of shops; and the only approach was by a narrow stair, which might have passed for clean in Rome, but VOL. 1. M 138 would have been considered dirty in England. On entering, I stood for some time in the passage; and though I enquired of several members of the establishment, who brushed past me, whether I could have accommodation, no answer was vouchsafed. At length, advancing to the bar, I observed the landlord, who was evidently too busily engaged in mixing brandy and water for a party of smokers, to have any attention to bestow on a stranger like myself. I, therefore, addressed a woman whom I observed to look towards me with something of cold enquiry in her expression, and again begged to know whether I could be accommodated for the night. The question was not more fortunate than its predecessors in drawing forth a response; nor was it till some minutes had elapsed, that, during a fortunate intermission of the demand for spirits, my enquiries were at length attended to, and satisfactorily answered. Matters now went on more promisingly. I found that I could not only be supplied with every thing within the scope of reasonable expectation, but with a luxury I had not ventured to anticipate—a private parlour, communicating with a very comfortable bedroom, and 139 accompanied with the privilege of commanding my own hours.

Having changed my dress, and given a few directions about dinner, I sallied forth to view the city. Providence is the capital of the State of Rhode Island, and contains about 25,000 inhabitants. It stands at the foot and on the brow of a hill, which commands a complete view of the fine bay. The great majority of the houses are built of wood, interspersed, however, with tenements of brick, and a few which are at least fronted with stone. It contains considerable cotton manufactories, which—boasting no knowledge of such matters—I was not tempted to visit. The college appears a building of some extent, and is finely situated on the summit of a neighbouring height. The roads were so obstructed by

snow, as to render climbing the ascent a matter of more difficulty than I was in the humour to encounter; and so it was decreed, that Brown's College should remain by me unvisited.

The first settlement of Providence is connected with a melancholy instance of human inconsistency. The Pilgrim Fathers, as they are called, had left their country, to find in the wilds of the New World that 140 religious toleration which had been denied them in the Old. But no sooner had these victims of persecution established themselves in New England, than, in direct and flagrant violation, not only of all moral consistency, but of the whole scope and spirit of the Christian religion, they became *persecutors* in their turn. Socinians and Quakers,—all, in short, who differed from them in opinion, were driven forth with outrage and violence. Among the number was Roger Williams, a Puritan clergyman, who ventured to expose what he considered “evidence of backsliding” in the churches of Massachusetts. The clergy at first endeavoured to put him down by argument and remonstrance; the attempt failed, and it was then determined that the civil authority should free the orthodox population from the dangerous presence of so able and sturdy a polemic. Roger Williams was banished, and, followed by a few of his people, continued to wander in the wilderness, till, coming to a place called by the Indians Mooshausic, he there pitched his tabernacle, and named it Providence.

Such are a few of the circumstances connected with the first establishment of the State of Rhode Island. 2 141 The light in which they exhibit human nature is not flattering; yet they only afford another proof, if such were wanted, of the natural connexion between bigotry and persecution, and that the victims of political or religious oppression, too often want only the power to become its ministers.

The only building which makes any pretension to architectural display is the arcade, faced at either extremity with an Ionic portico. Judging by the eye, the shaft of the columns is in the proportion of the Grecian Doric, an order beautiful in itself, but which, of course, is utterly barbarized by an Ionic entablature. By the way, I know not any thing in which the absence of taste in America is more signally displayed than in their architecture. The

country residences of the wealthier citizens are generally adorned with pillars, which often extend from the basement to the very top of the house, (some three or four stories,) supporting, and pretending to support, nothing. The consequence is, that the proportions of these columns are very much those of the stalk of a tobacco-pipe, and it is difficult to conceive any thing more unsightly. Even in the public buildings, there is often an obtrusive 142 disregard of every recognised principle of proportion, and clamorous demands are made on the admiration of foreigners, in behalf of buildings which it is impossible to look upon without instant and unhesitating condemnation.

In a seaport one generally takes a glance at the harbour, to draw some conclusions, however uncertain, with regard to the traffic of the place. The guide-books declare, that Providence has a good deal of foreign commerce. It may be so, but in the bay I could only count two square-rigged vessels, and something under a score of sloops and schooners.

I must not forget to mention, having witnessed today the progress of an operation somewhat singular in character. This was nothing less than raising a large tenement, for the purpose of introducing another story below. The building was of frame-work, with chimneys of brick, and consisted of two houses connected by the gable. The lower part of one was occupied as a warehouse, which seemed well filled with casks and cotton-bags. I stood for some time to observe the progress of the work. The process adopted was this: The building was first raised by 143 means of a succession of wedges inserted below the foundation. Having thus gained the requisite elevation, it was maintained there by supports at each corner, and by means of screws pressing laterally on the timbers. At the time I saw it, the building had been raised about five feet into the air, and the only mode of ingress or egress was by ladders. On looking with some curiosity at the windows, I soon gathered enough to convince me that the inhabitants were engaged in their usual domestic avocations, without being at all disturbed by their novel position in the atmosphere. As for the warehouse, the business of buying and selling had apparently encountered no

interruption. On the whole, the operation, though simple, struck me as displaying a very considerable degree of mechanical ingenuity.

Having finished my ramble, I returned to the inn, where a very tolerable dinner awaited my appearance. It was the first time I had dined alone since leaving England, and like my countrymen generally, I am disposed to attach considerable importance to the privilege of choosing my dinner, and the hour of eating it. It is only when alone that one enjoys the satisfaction 144 of feeling that he is a distinct unit in creation. At a public ordinary he is but a fraction, a decimal at most, but very probably a centesimal of a huge masticating monster, with the appetite of a Mastodon or a Behemoth. He labours under the conviction, that his meal has lost in dignity what it has gained in profusion. He is consorted involuntarily with people to whom he is bound by no tie but that of temporary necessity, and with whom, except the immediate impulse of brutal appetite, he has probably nothing in common. A man, like an American, thus diurnally mortified and abased from his youth upwards, of course knows nothing of the high thoughts which visit the imagination of the solitary, who, having finished a good dinner, reposes with a full consciousness of the dignity of his nature, and the high destinies to which he is called. The situation is one which naturally stimulates the whole inert mass of his speculative benevolence. He is at peace with all mankind, for he reclines on a well-stuffed sofa, and there are wine and walnuts on the table. He is on the best terms with himself, and recalls his own achievements in arms, literature, or philosophy, in a 145 spirit of the most benign complacency. If he look to the future, the prospect is bright and unclouded. If he revert to the past, its “written troubles,” its failures and misfortunes, are erased from the volume, and his memories are exclusively those of gratified power. He is in his slippers, and comfortable *robe-de-chambre* , and what to him, at such a moment, are the world and its ambitions? I appeal to the philosopher, and he answers—“Nothing!”

It was in such condition of enjoyment, physical and intellectual, that I was interrupted by the entrance of my servant, to inform me that he had just met Captain Bennet on the stairs, who, learning that I was at dinner, had obligingly expressed his intention of

favouring me with a visit at the conclusion of my meal. I immediately returned assurance, that nothing could afford me greater pleasure; and in a few minutes I had the satisfaction of exchanging a friendly grasp with this kind and intelligent sailor. In the course of our *tête-á-tête* , he informed me that he was travelling from his native town, New Bedford, to Boston, in company with Mrs Bennet, to whom he was good enough to offer me the privilege of an introduction. VOL. I. N 146 I accordingly accompanied the Captain to his apartment, where I passed a pleasant evening, and retired, gratified by the intelligence that they were to proceed on the following morning by the same vehicle in which I had already secured places. To travel with Captain Bennet was, in truth, not only a pleasure, but an advantage, for being a New Englander, he was enabled, in the course of our journey, to communicate many particulars with regard to his native province, which, though most useful in directing the opinions of a traveller, could scarcely, perhaps, have fallen within the immediate sphere of his observations.

On the following morning we were afoot betimes, and after a tolerable breakfast at a most unchristian hour, left Providence at seven o'clock, and I enjoyed my first introduction to an American stage-coach. Though what an Englishman, accustomed to the luxuries of “light-post coaches,” and Macadamised roads, might not unreasonably consider a wretched vehicle, the one in question was not so utterly abominable as to leave a Frenchman or an Italian any fair cause of complaint. It was of ponderous proportions, built with timbers, I should think about the size of those of an ordinary 147 waggon, and was attached by enormous straps to certain massive irons, which nothing in the motion of the carriage could induce the traveller to mistake for *springs.* The sides of this carriage were simply curtains of leather, which, when the heat of the weather is inconvenient, can be raised to admit a freer ventilation. In winter, however, the advantages of this contrivance are more than apocryphal. The wind penetrates through an hundred small crevices, and with the thermometer below zero, this freedom of circulation is not found to add materially to the pleasures of a journey. The complement of passengers inside was nine, divided into three rows, the middle seat being furnished with a strap, removable at pleasure, as

a back support to the sitters. The driver also receives a companion on the box, and the charge for this place is the same as for those in the interior. The whole machine indeed was exceedingly clumsy, yet perhaps not more so, than was rendered necessary by the barbarous condition of the road on which it travelled. The horses, though not handsome, were strong, and apparently well adapted for their work, yet I could not help smiling, as I thought 148 of the impression the whole *set out* would be likely to produce on an English road. The flight of an air balloon would create far less sensation. If exhibited as a specimen of a fossil carriage, buried since the Deluge, and lately discovered by Professor Buckland, it might pass without question as the family-coach in which Noah conveyed his establishment to the ark. Then the Jehu! A man in rusty black, with the appearance of a retired grave-digger! Never was such a coachman seen within the limits of the four seas.

Though the distance is only forty miles, we were eight hours in getting to Boston. The road, I remember to have set down at the time, as the very worst in the world, an opinion which my subsequent experience as a traveller in the United States, has long since induced me to retract. It abounded in deep ruts, and huge stones which a little exercise of the hammer might have converted into excellent material. English readers may smile when one talks seriously of the punishment of being jolted in a stage-coach, but to arrive at the end of a journey with bruised flesh and aching bones, is, on the whole, not particularly pleasant. For myself, I can truly say, that remembering 149 all I have occasionally endured in the matter of locomotion on the American continent, the martyr to similar sufferings shall always enjoy my sincere sympathy. On the present occasion, to say nothing of lateral concussion, twenty times at least was I pitched up with violence against the roof of the coach, which, being as ill provided with stuffing as the cushions below, occasioned a few changes in my phrenological developements. One of the passengers, however—a grave valetudinarian—assured me, that such unpleasant exercise was an admirable cure for dyspepsia, and that when suffering under its attacks, he found an unfailing remedy in being jolted over some forty or fifty miles of such roads as that we now travelled. At the moment, I certainly felt more inclined to pity him for the remedy than the disease.

There had been thaw during the night, and the greater part of the snow had disappeared. The country through which we passed was prettily varied in surface, but the soil was poor and stony, and the extent to which wood had been suffered to grow on land formerly subjected to the plough, showed it, had not been found to repay the cost of tillage. About 150 four miles from Providence, we passed the village of Pawtucket. It is one of the chief seats of the cotton manufacture in the United States. The aspect of the place is not unpleasing, and I counted about a dozen factories of considerable size. The houses of the workmen appeared neat and comfortable. I was informed, however, by my fellow-travellers, that, within the last eighteen months, every establishment in the place had become bankrupt; a proof, I should imagine, that the success of the Tariff system has not been very brilliant.

During our journey there was a good deal of conversation in the coach, in which I was physically too uneasy to bear any considerable part. I was amused, however, at the astonishment of a young Connecticut farmer, when Captain Bennet informed him, that in England, the white birch-tree—which, in this part of the world, is regarded as a noxious weed—is protected in artificial plantations with great care. He was evidently incredulous, though he had before made no difficulty in believing the numerous absurdities, in law, polity, and manners attributed,—whether with truth or otherwise,—to my countrymen. But to plant 151 the white birch-tree! This, indeed, was beyond the limits of belief.

The road, as we approached Boston, lay through a more populous country, and we passed a height, which commanded a fine view of the bay. At length, entering on a long street, I found myself again surrounded by the busy hum of a great city. The first impression was decidedly favourable. There is in Boston less of that rawness of outline, and inconsistency of architecture, which had struck me in New York. The truth is, that the latter has increased so rapidly, that nine-tenths of the city have been built within the last thirty years, and probably one-half of it within a third of the period. In Boston, both wealth and population have advanced at a slower pace. A comparatively small portion of the city

is new, and the hand of time has somewhat mellowed even its deformities, contributing to render that reverend which was originally rude.

There is an air of gravity and solidity about Boston; and nothing gay or flashy, in the appearance of her streets, or the crowd who frequent them. New York is a young giantess, weighing twenty stone, yet 152 frisky withal. Boston, a matron of stayed and demure aspect, a little past her prime perhaps, yet showing no symptom of decay. The former is brisk, bustling, and annually outgrowing her petticoats. The latter, fat, fair, and forty, a great breeder, but turning her children out of doors, as fast as she produces them. But it is an old and true apophthegm, that similes seldom run on all fours, and therefore it is generally prudent not to push them too far.

Most gratifying is it to a traveller in the United States, when, sick to death of the discomforts of the road, he finds himself fairly housed in the Tremont hotel. The establishment is on a large scale, and admirably conducted. I had no difficulty in procuring a small but very comfortable suite of apartments, deficient in nothing which a single gentleman could require. What is more, I enjoyed the blessing of rational liberty, had command of my own hours and motions, in short, could eat, drink, or sleep, at what time, in what manner, and on what substances I might prefer.

The truth is, that instead of being free, a large proportion of the American people live in a state of 153 the most degrading bondage. No liberty of tongue can compensate for vassalage of stomach. In their own houses, perhaps, they may do as they please, though I much doubt whether any servants would consent to live in a family who adopted the barbarous innovation of dining at six o'clock, and breakfasting at eleven. But on the road, and in their hotels, they are assuredly any thing but freemen. Their hours of rest and refection are there dictated by Boniface, the most rigorous and iron-hearted of despots. And surely never was monarch blessed with more patient and obedient subjects! He feeds them in droves like cattle. He rings a bell, and they come like dogs at their master's whistle. He places before them what he thinks proper, and they swallow it without

grumbling. His decrees are as those of fate, and the motto of his establishment is, “Submit or starve.”

No man should travel in the United States without one of Baraud's best chronometers in his fob. In no other country can a slight miscalculation of time be productive of so much mischief. Woe to him whose steps have been delayed by pleasure or business, till the fatal hour has elapsed, and the dinner-cloth been 154 removed. If he calculate on the emanation from the kitchen of smoking chop or spatchcock, he will be grievously deceived. Let him not look with contempt on half-coagulated soup, or fragments of cold fish, or the rhomboid of greasy pork, which has been reclaimed from the stock-barrel for his behoof. Let him accept in meekness what is set before him, or be content to go dinnerless for the day. Such are the horns of the dilemma, and he is free as air to choose on which he will be impaled.*

* It is fair, however, to state, that in the hotels in the greater cities, private apartments can generally be obtained. The charge for these is about as high as in London, and the privilege of separate meals is also to be paid for. To give the reader some idea of the expense of such mode of living in the United States, I may state, that in New York, with nothing but an inferior bedroom, and living at the public table, the charge for myself and servant was eighteen dollars a-week. At Boston, with three excellent rooms, and the privilege of private meals, it amounted, including every thing except wine, to thirty-five. At Philadelphia, I paid twenty-six dollars; at Baltimore, twenty-eight; at Washington, forty; the extent of accommodation nearly equal in all.

It is the invariable custom in the United States to charge by the day or week; and travellers are thus obliged to pay for meals whether they eat them or not. For a person who, like myself, rarely dined at home, I remember calculating the charge to be higher than in Long's, or the Clarendon.

On the morning following my arrival, I despatched my letters of introduction, and walked out to see the 155 city. Of its appearance, I have already said something, but have yet a little more to say. Boston stands on an undulating surface, and is bounded on three sides by the sea. The harbour is a magnificent basin, encircled by a beautiful country, rising in gentle acclivities, and studded with villas. There is nothing very handsome about the town, which is rather English in appearance, and might in truth be easily mistaken for one of our more populous seaports. A considerable number of the buildings are of granite, or, more properly speaking, of sienite, but brick is the prevailing material, and houses of framework are now rarely to be met with in the streets inhabited by the better orders. The streets are narrow, and often crooked, yet, as already stated, they exhibit more finish and cleanliness than are to be found in New York. In architecture, I could discover little to admire. The State-house stands on an eminence commanding the city; it is a massive square building, presenting in front a piazza of rusticated arches, surmounted by a gratuitous range of Corinthian columns, which support nothing. The building in front has a small attic with a pediment, and from the centre rises 156 a dome, the summit of which is crowned by a square lantern.

The Tremont hotel, and a church in the same street, are likewise pointed out to strangers as worthy of all the spare admiration at their disposal. The latter is a plain building, rather absurdly garnished, along its whole front, with a row of Ionic columns, stuck in close to the wall, which they are far from concealing; and, to increase the deformity, above these columns rises a naked square tower, intended, I presume, for a belfry.

An anecdote connected with this place of worship, however, is worth preserving: It was formerly called the King's Chapel, and belonged to a congregation holding the tenets of the Church of England. In this state of things a rich old gentleman died, bequeathing, by his last testament, a considerable sum, to be expended in defraying the charge of a certain number of annual discourses “on the Trinity.” The testator having lived and died in the communion of the Church of England, of course no doubt could be entertained of

his intention in the bequest; but the revolution took place, and, at the restoration of peace, the congregation 157 of the King's Chapel were found to have cast off both king and creed, and become not only Republicans in politics, but Unitarians in religion. Under these circumstances, what was to be done with the legacy? This did not long remain a moot point. It was discovered that a Unitarian could preach sermons on the Trinity as well as the most orthodox Athanasian that ever mounted a pulpit; and the effect of the testator's zeal for the diffusion of pure faith, has been to encourage the dissemination of doctrines, which of course he regarded as false and damnable! The old gentleman had better have left his money to his relations.

I have been too well satisfied with the good living of the Tremont hotel, not to feel grieved to be compelled to speak disparagingly of its architecture. I beg to say, however, that I allude to it only because I have heard its construction gravely praised by men of talent and intelligence, as one of the proudest achievements of American genius. The edifice is of fine sienite, and I imagine few parts of the world can supply a more beautiful material for building. In front is a Doric portico of four columns, accurately 158 proportioned, but, as usual, without pediment. These have not sufficient projection, and seem as if they had been thrust back upon the walls of the building by the force of some gigantic steam-engine. The dining-hall, which is here the chief object of admiration, is defective, both in point of taste and proportion. The ceiling, in the first place, is too low; and then the ranges of Ionic columns, which extend the whole length of the apartment, are mingled with Antæ of the composite order; thus defacing, by the intermixture of a late Roman barbarism, the purer taste of Greece. But it were mere waste of time and patience to enlarge on such matters.

My letters of introduction soon fructified into a plentiful harvest of visits and invitations. I discerned, or thought I discerned, some difference of manner between the gentlemen of Boston and those of New York. For the first five minutes, perhaps, the former seemed less pleasing, but my opinion in this respect soon changed, and I certainly now class many of

my Boston friends, not only among the most liberal and enlightened, but among the most agreeable men, I had the good fortune to encounter in my tour.

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My first visit was to a club, not professedly literary, but which numbered among its members many of the most eminent individuals of the State. Nothing could exceed the kindness of my reception. Several gentlemen, on learning my objects in visiting their city, obligingly professed their readiness to promote them by every means in their power, and I soon found that hospitality to strangers was by no means an exclusive attribute of New York.

The day following being Sunday, I attended morning service in one of the Episcopal churches. It was performed with great propriety to a congregation generally composed of the better orders. In the evening I accompanied an amiable family to a church, of which the celebrated Dr Channing is the pastor. The Doctor, I learned, was then at Havannah, whither he had accompanied Mrs Channing, whose health required a milder winter climate than that of New England. The tenets of the congregation are Unitarian, and the service is that of the Church of England, with the omission of all expressions which attribute divinity to our Saviour. Yet this, if not asserted, is not denied. It seems to have been the 160 object to establish a service in which all sects and classes of Christians may conscientiously join, and which affirms nothing in regard to those points which afford matter of controversy to Theologians.

Though the intentions of the framers of this service were obviously good, I am not sure that they have been guided by very just or philosophical views of the infirmities of human nature. The great benefit to be derived from public worship, is connected with the feeling of fellowship with those by whom we are surrounded, and that diffusive sentiment of charity and brotherhood, arising from community of faith. In the presence of God, it is indeed proper that all minor differences should be forgotten; but when these differences extend beyond a certain limit, and embrace the more sacred points of belief, I can understand

no benefit which can arise from the common adoption of a liturgy so mutilated, as to exclude all expression of that faith, and those doctrines, which Christians in general regard as the very keystone of their hope. The value of prayer, perhaps, consists less in any influence it can be supposed to have on the decrees of an eternal and immutable Being, than in that which it exercises 1 161 over the heart and feelings of the worshipper. To exert this influence, however, it must be felt to be appropriate to our individual wants and necessities. It must not deal in vague generalities, nor petition only for those blessings in which the great body of mankind possess an equal interest. Like material objects, the human feelings become uniformly weakened by extension. We cannot pray for the whole of our species with the same earnestness that we petition for the prosperity of our country, and our supplications in behalf of our family are yet more ardent. There is a gradation of fervour for each link of the chain as it approaches nearer to ourselves, and it is only, perhaps, in imploring mercy for some one individual, that our feelings reach their climax of intensity. I have no faith in the efficacy of a system of devotion founded on the abstract principles of philosophy. The religious worship of mankind must be accommodated to their infirmities. The prayer which is adapted to all sects, can evidently express the faith or sentiments of none.

The liturgy was plainly, and effectively, read by the Rev. Mr. Greenwood, whom I had the pleasure VOL. I. 0 162 of ranking among my acquaintance. The sermon was elegant, but somewhat cold and unemphatic. Indeed, how could it be otherwise? A Unitarian is necessarily cut off from all appeals to those deeper sources of feeling, which, in what is called Evangelical preaching, are found to produce such powerful effects. No spirit was ever strongly moved by a discourse on the innate beauty of virtue, or arguments in favour of moral purity, drawn from the harmony of the external world. The inference that man should pray, because the trees blossom and the birds sing, is about as little cogent in theory, as the experience of mankind has proved it in practice. The *sequitur* would be quite as good, were it asserted that men should wear spectacles because bears eat horse-flesh, and ostriches lay eggs in the sand. But admitting the conclusion to be clear as the daylight,

the disease of human depravity is too strong to be overcome by the administration of such gentle alteratives. Recourse must be had to stronger medicines, and these, unfortunately, the chest of the Unitarian does not furnish.

Boston is the metropolis of Unitarianism. In no 163 other city has it taken root so deeply, or spread its branches so widely. Fully half the population, and more than half of the wealth and intelligence of Boston, are found in this communion. I was at one time puzzled to account for this; but my journey to New England has removed the difficulty. The New Englanders are a cold, shrewd, calculating, and ingenious people, of phlegmatic temperament, and perhaps have in their composition less of the stuff of which enthusiasts are made, than any other in the world. In no other part of the globe, not even in Scotland, is morality at so high a premium. Nowhere is undeviating compliance with public opinion so unsparingly enforced. The only lever by which people of this character can be moved, is that of argument. A New Englander is far more a being of reason than of impulse. Talk to him of what is high, generous, and noble, and he will look on you with a vacant countenance. But tell him of what is just, proper, and essential to his own well-being, or that of his family, and he is all ear. His faculties are always sharp; his feelings are obtuse.

Unitarianism is the democracy of religion. Its 164 creed makes fewer demands on the faith or the imagination, than that of any other Christian sect. It appeals to human reason in every step of its progress, and while it narrows the compass of miracle, enlarges that of demonstration. Its followers have less bigotry than other religionists, because they have less enthusiasm. They refuse credence to the doctrine of one grand and universal atonement, and appeal to none of those sudden and preternatural impulses which have given assurance to the pious of other sects. A Unitarian will take nothing for granted but the absolute and plenary efficacy of his own reason in matters of religion. He is not a fanatic, but a dogmatist; one who will admit of no distinction between the incomprehensible and the false.

With such views of the Bostonians and their prevailing religion, I cannot help believing, that there exists a curious felicity of adaptation in both. The prosperity of Unitarianism in the New England States, seems a circumstance, which a philosophical observer of national character, might, with no great difficulty, have predicted. Jonathan chose his religion, as one does a hat, because it fitted him. We 165 believe, however, that his head has not yet attained its full size, and confidently anticipate that its speedy enlargement will ere long induce him to adopt a better and more orthodox covering.

One of my first morning's occupations was to visit Cambridge University, about three miles distant. In this excursion I had the advantage of being accompanied by Professor Ticknor, who obligingly conducted me over every part of the establishment. The buildings, though not extensive, are commodious; and the library—the largest in the United States—contains about 30,000 volumes; no very imposing aggregate. The academical course is completed in four years, at the termination of which the candidates for the degree of Bachelor of Arts are admitted to that honour, after passing the ordeal of examination. In three years more, the degree of Master may—as in the English Universities—be taken as matter of course. There are three terms in the year, the intervals between which amount to about three months. The number of students is somewhat under two hundred and fifty. These have the option of either living *more academico* in the college, or of boarding in 166 houses in the neighbourhood. No religious tenets are taught; but the regnant spirit is unquestionably Unitarian. In extent, in opulence, and in number of students, the establishment is not equal even to the smallest of our Scottish Universities.

On leaving Cambridge, we drove to Bunker's Hill, celebrated as the spot on which the first collision took place between the troops of the mother-country and her rebellious colonists. It is a strong position, and if duly strengthened by intrenchments, might be defended against an enemy of much superior force. On the summit of this height, a monument to the memory of Washington was in progress. A more appropriate site could not have

been selected. But tributes of stone or brass are thrown away upon Washington. *Si monumentum quæris, circumspice.*

Our next visit was to the navy-yard, an establishment of considerable extent. There were two seventy-fours on the stocks, and, if I remember rightly, a frigate and a sloop. A dry-dock had nearly been completed of size sufficient to receive the largest line-of-battle ship. Commodore Morris, the commandant, was obligingly communicative, and, in the course even 167 of a short conversation, afforded abundant proof, that his acquirements were very far from being exclusively professional.

On the day following, I went, accompanied by a very kind friend, to see the State-prison at Charleston. The interesting description given by Captain Hall of the prison at Sing-Sing had raised my curiosity, and I felt anxious to inspect an establishment, conducted on the same general principle, and with some improvements in detail. It was difficult to conceive, that a system of discipline so rigid could be maintained, without a degree of severity revolting to the feelings. That hundreds of men should live together for years in the daily association of labour, under such a rigorous and unbroken system of restraint, as to prevent them during all that period from holding even the most trifling intercourse, seemed a fact so singular, and in such direct opposition to the strongest propensities of human nature, as to require strong evidence to establish its credibility. I was glad to take advantage, therefore, of the first opportunity to visit the prison at Charleston, and the scene there presented, was unquestionably one of the most striking 168 I have ever witnessed. Pleasant it was not; for it cannot be so to witness the degradation and sufferings of one's fellow-creatures.

In no part of the establishment, however, was there any thing squalid or offensive. The gaoler—one expects hard features in such an official—was a man of mild expression, but of square and sinewy frame. He had formerly been skipper of a merchantman, and it was impossible to compliment him on the taste displayed in his change of profession. Before

proceeding on the circuit of the prison, he communicated some interesting details in regard to its general management, and the principles on which it was conducted.

The prisoners amounted to nearly three hundred; the keepers were only fourteen. The disparity of force, therefore, was enormous; and as the system adopted was entirely opposed to that of solitary confinement, it did, at first sight, seem strange that the convicts —the greater part of whom were men of the boldest and most abandoned character —should not take advantage of their vast physical superiority, and, by murdering the keepers, regain their liberty. 169 A cheer,—a cry,—a signal, would be enough; they had weapons in their hands, and it required but a momentary effort of one-tenth of their number to break the chains of perhaps the most galling bondage to which human beings were ever subjected.

In what then consisted the safety of the gaoler and his assistants? In one circumstance alone. In a *surveillance* so strict and unceasing, as to render it physically impossible, by day or night, for the prisoners to hold the slightest communication, without discovery. They set their lives upon this cast. They knew the penalty of the slightest negligence, and they acted like men who knew it.

The buildings enclose a quadrangle of about two hundred feet square. One side is occupied by a building, in which are the cells of the prisoners. It contains three hundred and four solitary cells, built altogether of stone, and arranged in four stories. Each cell is secured by a door of wrought iron. On the sides where the cell-doors present themselves, are stone galleries, three feet wide, supported by cast-iron pillars. These galleries extend the whole length of the building, and encircle three sides of these ranges VOL. I. P 170 of cells. The fourth presents only a perpendicular wall, without galleries, stairs, or doors. Below, and exterior to the cells and galleries, runs a passage nine feet broad, from which a complete view of the whole can be commanded.

The cells have each a separate ventilator. They are seven feet long, three feet six inches wide, and contain an iron bedstead. On one side, considerably elevated, is a safety watch-box, with an alarum-bell, at the command only of the gaoler on duty. In front of the building, or rather between the building and the central quadrangle, is the kitchen, communicating, by doors and windows, with a passage, along which the prisoners must necessarily travel in going to, or returning from their cells. Adjoining is a chapel, in which the convicts attend prayers twice a-day.

In regard to the system of discipline enforced in this interesting establishment, it may be better described in other words than my own. The following is an extract from the annual report of the Boston Prison Discipline Society:—“From the locking up at night till daylight, all the convicts, except an average 171 of about five in the hospital, are in the new building, in separate cells, and in cells so arranged, that a sentinel on duty can preserve entire silence among three hundred. The space around the cells being open from the ground to the roof, in front of four stories of cells, in a building two hundred feet in length, furnishes a perfect sounding gallery, in which the sentinel is placed, who can hear a whisper from the most distant cell. He can, therefore, keep silence from the time of locking up at night to the time of unlocking in the morning, which, at some seasons of the year, makes more than one half of all the time, which is thus secured from evil communication. From the time of unlocking in the morning, about twelve minutes are occupied in a military movement of the convicts, in companies of thirty-eight, with an officer to each company, in perfect silence, to their various places of labour. At the end of that period, it is found that there is a place for every man, and every man in his place. This is as true of the officers as of the convicts. If an officer have occasion to leave his place, the system requires that a substitute be called; if a convict have occasion to leave his place, there is 172 a token provided for each shop, or for a given number of men, so that from this shop or number only one convict can leave his place at a time. The consequence is, that with the exception of those who have the tokens in their hands, any officer of the institution may be certain of finding, during the hours of labour, a place for every man, and every man in his place.

There is, however, a class of men, consisting of ten or twelve, called *runners* and *lumpers* , whose duty consists in moving about the yard. But even their movements are in silence and order. Consequently, during the hours of labour, the convicts are never seen moving about the yard promiscuously, or assembled in little groups, in some hiding-places of mischief, or even two and two in common conversation. All is order and silence, except the busy noise of industry during the hours of labour.

“The hours of labour in the morning vary a little with the season of the year, but amount at this season to nearly two hours, from the time of unlocking in the morning till breakfast. When the hour for breakfast comes, almost in an instant the convicts are all seen marching in solid and silent columns, with 173 the lock-step, under their respective officers, from the shops to the cells. On their way to the cells they pass the cookery, where the food, having been made ready, is handed to them as they pass along; and at the end of about twelve minutes, from the time of ringing the bell for breakfast, all the convicts are in their cells eating their breakfasts, silently and alone. One officer only is left in charge to preserve silence, and the others are as free from solicitude and care, till the hour for labour returns, as other citizens.

“When the time of labour again returns, which is at the end of about twenty-five minutes, almost in an instant the whole body of convicts are again seen marching as before to their places of labour. On their way to the shops, they pass through the chapel and attend prayers. The time from breakfast till dinner, passes away like the time for labour before breakfast, all the convicts being found in their places industriously employed in silence. The time assigned for dinner is filled up in the same manner as the time assigned for breakfast; and the time for labour in the afternoon, in the same manner as the time for labour in the morning; and when the time for evening 174 prayers has come, at the ringing of the bell, all the convicts, and all the officers not on duty elsewhere, are seen marching to the chapel, where the chaplain closes the day with reading the Scriptures and prayer. After which, the convicts march with perfect silence and order to their cells, taking their supper as they pass along. In about five-and-twenty minutes from the time of leaving their labour,

the convicts have attended prayers in the chapel, taken their supper, marched to their cells with their supper in their hands, and are safely locked up for the night. This is the history of a day at Charleston; and the history of a day is the history of a year, with the variations which are made on the Sabbath, by dispensing with the hours of labour, and substituting the hours for instruction in the Sabbath-School, and the hours for public worship."

We had hardly time to examine the arrangement of the cells, when the dinner-bell sounded, and issuing out into the quadrangle, the prisoners marched past in military array. In passing the kitchen, each man's dinner was thrust out on a sort of ledge, from which it was taken without any interruption of his progress. 175 In less than two minutes they were in their "deep solitudes and awful cells," and employed in the most agreeable duty of their day—dinner. I again entered the building, to listen for the faintest whisper. None was to be heard; the silence of the desert could not be deeper. In about half-an-hour, another bell rang, and the prisoners were again a-foot. The return to labour differed in nothing from the departure from it; but the noise of saws, axes, and hammers, soon showed they were now differently employed.

The gaoler next conducted us through the workshops. Each trade had a separate apartment. The masons were very numerous; so were the carpenters and coopers. The tailors were employed in making clothes for their companions in misfortune, and the whole establishment had the air rather of a well-conducted manufactory than of a prison. There was nothing of deep gloom, but a good deal of callous indifference, generally observable in the countenances of the convicts. In some, however, I thought I did detect evidence of overwhelming depression. Yet this might be imagination, and when I pointed out 176 the individuals to the gaoler, he assured me I was mistaken.

The prisoners are allowed to hold no intercourse of any kind with the world, beyond the walls which enclose them. It is a principle invariably adhered to, that they shall be made to feel, that during their confinement—and many are confined for life—they are beings cut off even from the commonest sympathies of mankind. I know not but that severity in

this respect has been carried too far. If they are again to be turned out upon society, is it not injudicious as it is cruel policy, to trample on the affections even of these depraved and guilty beings, and to send them forth with every tie broken which might act as a motive to reformation? What can be expected from men so circumstanced, but that they will renew their former courses, or plunge into guilt yet deeper? On the other hand, if they are to be immured for life, the punishment can be considered as little better than gratuitous barbarity. But the great evil is, that on the utterly abandoned it falls lightly. It is the heart guilty, yet not hardened in guilt, which is still keenly 177 alive to the gentler and purer affections, that it crushes with an oppression truly withering. And can no penalty be discovered more appropriate for the punishment of the sinner, than one which falls directly and exclusively on the only generous sympathies which yet link him to his fellow-men? Why should he be treated like a brute, whose very sufferings prove him to be a man?

The whole produce of the labour of the prisoners belongs to the State. No portion of it is allowed to the prisoner on his discharge. This regulation may be judicious in America, where the demand for labour is so great, that every man may, at any time, command employment; but in Great Britain it is different, and there to turn out a convict on the world, penniless, friendless, and without character, would be to limit his choice to the alternative of stealing or starving.

Of course, a system of discipline so rigorous could not be enforced without a power of punishment, almost arbitrary, being vested in the gaoler. The slightest infraction of the prison rules, therefore, is uniformly followed by severe infliction. There is no 178 pardon, and no impunity for offenders of any sort; and here, as elsewhere, the certainty of punishment following an offence is found very much to diminish the necessity for its frequency. There is great evil, however, in this total irresponsibility on the part of the gaoler. There is no one to whom the convict, if unjustly punished, can complain; and a power is intrusted to an uneducated man, possibly of strong passions, which the wisest and best of mankind would feel himself unfit to exercise. I cannot help thinking, therefore, that a board of inspectors should assemble at least monthly at the prison, in order to

hear all complaints that may be made against the gaoler. There is no doubt that this unpopular functionary would be subject to many false and frivolous accusations. The latter, however, may always be dismissed without trouble of any sort, but all plausible charges should receive rigid and impartial examination. The circumstances connected with the Charleston prison are precisely the most favourable for the attainment of truth. There can be no concert among the witnesses to be examined—no system of false evidence got up —no plotting—no collusion. Here coincidence 179 of testimony could be explained only on the hypothesis of its truth; and this circumstance must be quite as favourable to the gaoler as to the prisoners. The former could never want the means of vindication, if falsely impeached.

I had a good deal of conversation with the gaoler in regard to the effects produced by the system on the morals of the convicts. He at once admitted that any material improvement of character in full-grown offenders was rarely to be expected, but maintained that the benefit of the Charleston system, even in this respect, was fully greater than had been found to result from any other plan adopted in the United States. His experience had not led him to anticipate much beneficial consequence from the system of solitary confinement. He had seen it often tried, but the prisoners on their liberation had almost uniformly relapsed into their former habits of crime. One interesting anecdote which occurred under his own observation, I shall here record.

Many years ago, long before the establishment of the present prison system, a man of respectable connexions, but of the most abandoned habits, was convicted 180 of burglary, and arrived at Charleston jail, under sentence of imprisonment for life. His spirit was neither humbled by the punishment nor the disgrace. His conduct towards the keepers was violent and insubordinate, and it was soon found necessary, for the maintenance of discipline, that he should be separated from his fellow-prisoners, and placed in solitary confinement. For the first year he was sullen and silent; and the clergyman who frequently visited him in his cell, found his mind impervious to all religious impression. But by degrees a change took place in his deportment. His manner became mild and subdued;

he was often found reading the Scriptures, and both gaoler and chaplain congratulated themselves on the change of character so manifest in the prisoner. He spoke of his past life, and the fearful offences in which it had abounded, with suitable contrition, and expressed his gratitude to God, that, instead of being snatched away in the midst of his crimes, time had been afforded him for repentance, and the attainment of faith in that grand and prevailing atonement, by the efficacy of which even the greatest of sinners might look for pardon.

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Nothing, in short, could be more edifying than this man's conduct and conversation. All who saw him became interested in the fate of so meek a Christian, and numerous applications were made to the Governor of the State for his pardon. The Governor, with such weight of testimony before him, naturally inclined to mercy, and in a few weeks the man would have been undoubtedly liberated, when one day, in the middle of a religious conversation, he sprang upon the keeper, stabbed him in several places, and having cut his throat, attempted to escape.

The attempt failed. The neophyte in evangelism was brought back to his cell, and loaded with heavy irons. In this condition he remained many years, of course without the slightest hope of liberation. At length, his brother-in-law, a man of influence and fortune in South Carolina, made application to the authorities of Massachusetts on his behalf. He expressed his readiness to provide for his unfortunate relative, and, if liberated, he promised, on his arrival in Charleston, to place him in a situation above all temptation to return to his former crimes.

This offer was accepted; the prisoner was set at 182 liberty, and the gaoler, who told me the anecdote, was directed to see him safely on board of a Charleston packet, in which due provision had been made for his reception. His imprisonment had extended to the long period of twenty years, during which he had never once breathed the pure air of heaven, nor gazed on the sun or sky. In the interval, Boston, which he remembered as a

small town, had grown into a large city. Its advance in opulence had been still more rapid. In every thing there had been a change. The appearance, manners, habits, thoughts, prejudices, and opinions of the generation then living, were different from all to which he had been accustomed. Nor was the aspect of inanimate objects less altered. Streets of framework cottages had been replaced by handsome squares, and stately edifices of brick. Gay equipages, such as he never remembered, met his observation at every turn. In short, he felt like the inhabitant of another planet, suddenly cast into a world of which he knew nothing.

My informant—I wish I could give the story in his own words—described well and feelingly the progress of the man's impressions. A coach had been 183 provided for his conveyance to the packet. On first entering it he betrayed no external symptom of emotion; but as the carriage drove on, he gazed from the window, endeavouring to recognise the features of the scenery. But in vain; he looked for marsh and forest, and he beheld streets; he expected to cross a poor ferry, and the carriage rolled over a magnificent bridge; he looked for men as he had left them, and he saw beings of aspect altogether different. Where were the great men of the Statehouse and the Exchange—the aristocracy of the dollar bags—the Cincinnati of the Revolution, who brought to the counting-house the courtesies of the camp and the parade, and exhibited the last and noblest specimens of the *citizen gentleman?* They had gone down to their fathers full of years and of honour, and their descendants had become as the sons of other men. Queues, clubs, periwigs, shoe-buckles, hair-powder, and cocked hats, had fled to some other and more dignified world. The days of dram-drinking and tobacco-chewing, of gaiters, trowsers, and short crops, had succeeded. In short, the whole scene was too much for the poor convict to 184 bear unmoved. His spirit was weighed down by a feeling of intense solitude, and he burst into tears.

The remainder of the story may be told in a few words. He reached Charleston, where his brother placed him in a respectable boarding-house, and supplied him with necessaries of every kind. His conduct for the first year was all that could be desired. But at length

in an evil hour he was induced to visit New York. He there associated with profligate companions, and relapsing into his former habits, was concerned in a burglary, for which he was tried and convicted. He is now in the prison at Sing-Sing, under sentence of imprisonment for life, and from death only can he hope for liberation.

The gaoler told me this anecdote, as a proof how little amendment of the moral character is to be expected from solitary confinement. The case undoubtedly is a strong one, yet, of all the systems of punishment hitherto devised, the entire isolation of the criminal from his fellow-men,—if judicious advantage be taken of the opportunities it affords, and the state of mind which it can scarcely fail to produce, l 185 —seems that which is most likely to be attended with permanent reformation. The great objection to the Auburn and Charleston system, is, that the prisoners are treated like brutes, and any lurking sense of moral dignity is destroyed. Each individual is not only degraded in his own eyes, but in those of his companions; and it appears impossible that a criminal, once subjected to such treatment, should ever after be qualified to discharge, with advantage to his country, the duties of a citizen. Solitary confinement, on the other hand, has necessarily no such consequence; it at once obviates all occasion for corporal punishment, and for the exercise of arbitrary and irresponsible power on the part of the gaoler. The prisoner, on his liberation, is restored to society, humbled, indeed, by long suffering, yet not utterly degraded below the level of his fellow-creatures.

On the whole, the system of discipline I have witnessed at Charleston must be considered as a curious experiment, illustrating the precise degree of coercion necessary to destroy the whole influence of human volition, and reduce man to the condition of a machine. VOL. I Q 186 How far it accomplishes the higher objects contemplated in the philosophy of punishment, is a question which demands more consideration than I have at present time or inclination to bestow on it. I anticipate, however, having occasion to return to the subject, at a future period of my narrative.

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CHAPTER VII. BOSTON.

The New England States are the great seat of manufactures in the Union; and in Boston especially, it is impossible to mix at all in society without hearing discussions on the policy of the Tariff Bill. I was prepared to encounter a good deal of bigotry on this subject, but on the whole found less than I expected. Of course, here, as elsewhere, men will argue strenuously and earnestly on the policy of a measure, with which they know their own interests to be inseparably connected; but both the advocates and opponents of the Tariff are to be found mingled very sociably at good men's feasts, and I have not been able to discover that antagonism of opinion has been in any degree productive of hostility of feeling.

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On this question, as on many others, the weight of numbers is on one side, and that of sound argument on the other. It is the observation, I think, of Hobbes, that were it to become the interest of any portion of the human race to deny the truth of a proposition in Euclid, by no power of demonstration could it ever after command universal assent. This may be going too far, but we know how difficult it is, in the less certain sciences, to influence the understanding of those in favour of a conclusion, whose real or imagined interests must be injuriously affected by its establishment. Truths cease to be palpable when they touch a man's prejudices or his pocket, and patriotism is generally found at a premium or a discount, precisely as it happens to be connected with profit or loss.

It was not to be expected, therefore, that a question affecting the various and conflicting interests of different classes of men should be discussed in a very calm or philosophical spirit. “The American system,” as it is called, was strenuously supported by the rich northern merchants, who expected to find in manufactures a new and profitable investment for their 189 capital, and by the farmers, who, from a large increase in the home consumption, anticipated better prices for their wool and corn than could be commanded in the English market. It was opposed with at least equal vehemence by

the planters of the Southern States, who regarded England as their best customer, and who must have been the chief sufferers had these measures of restriction been met by retaliation. Of course, as no manufactures of any kind exist south of the Potomac, the inhabitants of that extensive region were by no means satisfied of the justice of a policy, which, by increasing the price of all foreign commodities, had the effect of transferring money from their pockets to those of the New England monopolists. The Tariff Bill encountered strong opposition in both houses of the Legislature, but the representatives of the Western States having declared in its favour, it eventually passed, though by narrow majorities, and became law.

The passing of this bill inflicted a deep wound on the stability of the Union. The seeds of dissension among the different States had long been diffused, and now began to exhibit signs of rapid and luxuriant 190 growth. The inhabitants of the Southern States were almost unanimous against the law. Their representatives not only protested loudly against its injustice, but declared, that in imposing duties, not for the sake of revenue but protection, Congress had wantonly exceeded its powers, and violated one of the fundamental principles of the Constitution. Thus arose the celebrated doctrine of *nullification* , or, in other words, the assertion of an independent power in each State of the Union, to decide for itself on the justice of the measures of the Federal government, and to declare null, within its own limits, any act of the Federal Congress which it may consider as an infraction of its separate rights.

To this great controversy, affecting in its very principle the cohesion of the different states, I shall not at present do more than allude. It does, however, appear abundantly clear, that if there ever was a country in which it is injudicious to trammel industry with artificial restrictions, that country is the United States. Covering a vast extent of fertile territory, and advancing in wealth and population with a rapidity altogether unparalleled, it seems only necessary 191 to the happiness and prosperity of this favoured people, that they should refrain from counteracting the beneficence of nature, and tranquilly enjoy the many blessings which she has placed within their reach. But this, unfortunately, is precisely what

American legislators are not inclined to do. They seem determined to have a prosperity of their own making; to set up rival Birminghams and Manchesters; and in spite of “nature and their stars,” to become, without delay, a great manufacturing, as well as a great agricultural nation.

But such things as Birmingham and Manchester are not to be created by an act of Congress. They can arise only under a vast combination of favourable circumstances, the approach of which may be retarded, but cannot possibly be accelerated, by a system of restrictions. They would undoubtedly have arisen far sooner in England, but for the ignorant adoption of the very policy which the Americans have now thought it expedient to imitate. But there is this excuse at least for our ancestors: The policy they adopted was in the spirit of their age. They did not seek to revive the exploded dogmas of a country or a 192 period less enlightened than their own; and it can only be charged against them, that in seeking to gain a certain object, with but few and scattered lights to guide their footsteps, they went astray.

But to such palliation the conduct of the American legislators has no claim. With the path before them clear as daylight, they have preferred entangling themselves in thickets and quagmires. Like children, they have closed their eyes, and been content to believe that all is darkness. Living in one age, they have legislated in the spirit of another, and their blunders want even the merit of originality. They have exchanged their own comfortable clothing for the cast-off garments of other men, and strangely appeal to their antiquity as evidence of their value.

The appeal to English precedent may have some weight as an *argumentum ad hominem* , but as an *argumentum veritatis* it can have none. We freely admit, that there is no absurdity so monstrous, as to want a parallel in the British statute-book. We only hope that we are outgrowing our errors, and profiting, however tardily, by our own experience and that of the world. But even this praise the advocates of American 193 monopoly are not inclined to allow us. They charge us with bad faith in our commercial reforms; with

arguing on one side, and acting on the other; and allege, that our statesmen, with the words *free trade* constantly on their lips, are still guided in their measures, by the spirit of that antiquated policy, which they so loudly condemn.

Enough of allowance, however, has not been made for the difficulties of their situation. Our legislators, it should be remembered, had to deal with vast interests, which had grown up under the exclusive system so long and rigidly adhered to. Any great and sudden change in our commercial policy would have been ruinous and unjust. It was necessary that the transition should be gradual, even to a healthier regimen,—that men's opinions should be conciliated, and that time should be afforded for the adjustment of vested interests to the new circumstances of competition which awaited them. The question was far less as to the truth or soundness of certain abstract doctrines of political economy, than by what means changes affecting the disposition of the whole capital of the country, could be introduced with least injury and alarm. VOL. I. R

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Those only who have minutely followed the public life of Mr Huskisson during the last ten years, can duly estimate the magnitude of the obstacles with which at every step of his progress he had to contend. In truth, we know not any portion of history which would better repay the study of American statesmen. They will there acquire some knowledge of the difficulties, which assuredly, sooner or later, they will be compelled to encounter. They will learn, that a system of prohibition cannot be abandoned with the same ease with which it was originally assumed. Their first advance in a course of restriction may be prosperous, but their retreat must necessarily be disastrous. They will have to endure the reproaches of the bankrupt manufacturers. They will have the punishment of beholding a large proportion of the capital of their country irrecoverably lost. They will be assailed by the clamour and opposition of men of ruined fortunes and disappointed hopes, and while they lament the diminution of their country's prosperity, will scarcely escape from the conviction of its being attributable solely to their own selfish and ignorant policy.

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In no country in the world, perhaps, could the prohibitory system be tried with less prospect of success than in the United States. The vast extent of territory alone presents an insuperable obstacle to its enforcement. The statesmen of England had no such difficulty to struggle with. They had to legislate for a small, compact, and insular country, in which there existed no such diversity of climate or of interest as to create much inequality of pressure in any scheme, however unreasonable, of indirect taxation. In England, there are no provincial jealousies to be reconciled, no rivalries or antipathies between different portions of the kingdom, and the facilities of communication are already so great as to give promise that the word *distance* will be speedily erased from our vocabulary.

But in America all this is different. Those err egregiously who regard the population of the United States as an uniform whole, composed throughout of similar materials, and whose patriotic attachment embraces the whole territory between the Mississippi and the Penobscot. In truth, the Union hangs very loosely together, and sectional jealousies abound everywhere. 196 Entire disparity of circumstances and situation between the Northern and Southern States has produced an incurable aversion in their inhabitants; and disputes, arising from differences of climate and interest, are evidently beyond the control of legislative interference. The Georgian or Carolinian lives in a state of the most profound indifference with regard to the prosperity of New England, or rather, perhaps, is positively jealous of any increase of wealth or population, by which that portion of the Union may acquire additional influence in the national councils. To the people of the Southern States, therefore, any indirect taxation, imposed for the benefit of the Northern, must be doubly odious. The former wish only to buy where they can buy cheapest, and to sell where they can find the best market for their produce. Besides, they are violent and high-spirited, strong republicans, and averse from any unnecessary exercise of power on the part of the Federal government. England is their great customer; and the planter can entertain no reasonable hope of opulence which is not founded on her prosperity. Such are the discordant materials with which Congress has to deal, and which visionary 197 legislators have vainly attempted to unite in cordial support of “the American system.”

It is obvious, that a legislature which enters on a system of protection-duties, assumes the exercise of a power with which no wise men would wish to be intrusted, and which it is quite impossible they can exercise with advantage. They, in fact, assume the direction of the whole industry and capital of the country; dictate in what channels they shall flow; arbitrarily enrich one class at the expense of another; tax the many for the benefit of the few; and, in short, enter on a policy, which, if followed by other countries, would necessarily put a stop to all commerce, and throw each nation on its individual resources. There can be no *reductio ad absurdum* more complete. The commercial intercourse of nations would be annihilated were there a dozen governments in the world actuated by a cupidity so blind and uncalculating. It is, besides, impossible that any system of protection can *add* any thing to the productive industry of a people. The utmost it can effect is the transference of labour and capital from one branch of employment to another. It simply holds out a bribe to individuals 198 to divert their industry from the occupations naturally most profitable, to others which are less so. This cannot be done without national loss. The encouragement which is felt in one quarter, must be accompanied by at least equal depression in another. The whole commercial system is made to rest on an insecure and artificial foundation, and the capital of the country, which has been influenced in its distribution, by a temporary and contingent impulse, may, at any moment, be paralysed by a change of system.

It is impossible, therefore, as matters now stand in America, that the manufacturing capitalists can look with any feeling of security to the future. They know, that the sword which is suspended over them hangs only by a hair, and may fall at any time. A large portion of the Union are resolutely, and almost unanimously, opposed to the continuance of the system. The monopolists, therefore, can ground their speculations on no hope but that of large and *immediate* profits, and the expectation, that should the present Tariff continue in force but a few years, they will, in that period, not only have realized the original amount of their investments, but a return sufficiently 199 large to compensate for all the hazards of the undertaking. It is from the pockets of their fellow-subjects that they

look for this enormous reimbursement; and, in a general point of view, perhaps, it matters little how much of the wealth of Virginia and the Carolinas may be transferred to New England, since the aggregate of national opulence would continue unchanged. One great and unmitigated evil of the Tariff-tax, however, consists in this, that while it is unjust and oppressive in its operation, it destroys far more capital than it sends into the coffers either of the Government or of individuals. All that portion of increased price which proceeds from increased difficulty of production in any article, is precisely so much of the national capital annihilated without benefit of any sort.

But, in truth, the exclusion of British goods from the Union is impossible. The extent of the Canadian frontier is so great, that the vigilance of a million of custom-house officers could not prevent their introduction. A temptation high in exact proportion to the amount of the restrictive duty, is held out to every trader; or, in other words, the government 200 which enforces the impost, offers a premium for its evasion. If Jonathan—which we much doubt—is too honest to smuggle, John Canadian is not; and the consequence simply is, that the United States are supplied with those goods from Montreal, which, under other circumstances, would have been directly imported. I remember walking through some warehouses in New York with an eminent merchant of that city; and on remarking the vast profusion of British manufactures everywhere apparent, he significantly answered, “Depend upon it, you have seen more goods to-day than ever passed the Hook.” In this matter, therefore, there exists no discrepancy between reason and experience. The trade between the countries still goes on with little, if any diminution. It has only been diverted from its natural and wholesome channel; taken from the respectable merchant, and thrown into the hands of the smuggler.

Among the body of the people there exists more ignorance as to the nature and effects of commerce, than might have been expected in a nation so generally commercial. I believe the sight of the vast importations from Britain, which fill the warehouses in 201 every seaport, is accompanied with a feeling not unallied to envy. They would pardon us for our king and our peers, our palaces and our parade, far sooner than for our

vast manufactories, which deluge the world with their produce. Such feelings are the consequence of ignorant and narrow views. In truth, every improvement in machinery which is effected in Leeds or Manchester is a benefit to the world. By its agency the price of some commodity has been lowered, and an article, perhaps essential to comfort, is thus brought within the reach of millions to whom it must otherwise have been inaccessible.

Any sentiment of jealousy arising from the diffusion of British manufactures in their own country, is no less absurd. Every increase of importation is, in fact, an evidence of increased opulence and prosperity in the importing country. Not a bale of goods is landed at the quay of New York, without an equal value of the produce of the country being exported to pay for it. Commerce is merely a barter of equivalents, and carries this advantage, that both parties are enriched by it. Thus, a piece of muslin may be more valuable in America, than a bag of cotton; 202 while in England, the superiority of value is on the side of the latter. It is evident, therefore, that if these two articles be exchanged, both parties are gainers; both receive a greater value than they have given, and the mass of national opulence, both in England and America, has sustained a positive increase. A commerce which is not mutually advantageous, cannot be continued. No Tariff bill,—no system of restriction, is required to put a stop to it. Governments have no reason to concern themselves about the balance of trade. They may safely leave that to individual sagacity, and devote their attention to those various interests in which legislation may at least possibly be attended with benefit.

But formidable as the difficulties are which surround the supporters of the prohibitory system, another is approaching, even of greater magnitude. In two years the national debt will be extinguished, and the Federal government will find itself in possession of a surplus revenue of 12,000,000 of dollars, chiefly the produce of the Tariff duties. The question will then arise, how is this revenue to be appropriated? If divided among the different states, the tranquillity 203 of the Union will be disturbed by a thousand jealousies, which very probably would terminate in its dissolution. Besides, such an appropriation is confessedly unconstitutional, and must arm the government with a power never contemplated at its

formation. To apply the surplus in projects of general improvement, under direction of Congress, would increase many of the difficulties, while it obviated none. In short, there is no escaping from the dilemma; and, singular as it may seem to an Englishman, the Tariff will probably be extinguished by a sheer plethora of money. The most enlightened statesmen unite in the conviction, that there is but one course to be pursued, and that is, to reduce the duties to a fair system of revenue; to extract from the pockets of the people what is sufficient for the necessary expenses of the government, and no more. It is singular, that the wealth of a nation, which in other countries is found to generate corruption, should, in the United States, be the means of forcing the government to return to the principles of sound and constitutional legislation.

I am aware that there is nothing new in all this, 204 nor is it possible, perhaps, to be very original on a subject which has been so often and so thoroughly discussed. It ought, perhaps, in justice to be stated, that the majority of the gentlemen among whom I moved in Boston, were opposed to the Tariff, and that I derived much instruction both from their conversation and writings. The great majority of the mercantile population, however, are in favour of the prohibitory system, though I could not discover much cogency in the arguments by which they support it. To these, however, I shall not advert, and gladly turn from a subject, which I fear can possess little interest for an English reader.

A traveller has no sooner time to look about him in Boston, than he receives the conviction that he is thrown among a population of a character differing in much from that of the other cities of the Union. If a tolerable observer, he will immediately remark that the lines of the forehead are more deeply indented; that there is more hardness of feature; a more cold and lustreless expression of the eye; a more rigid compression of the lips, and that the countenance altogether is of a graver and more meditative cast. Something 205 of all this is apparent even in childhood; as the young idea shoots, the peculiarities become more strongly marked; they grow with his growth, and strengthen with his strength, and it is only when the New Englander is restored to his kindred dust that they are finally obliterated. Observe him in every different situation; at the funeral, and the marriage-feast; at the

theatre, and the conventicle; in the ball-room, and on the exchange, and you will set him down as of God's creatures the least liable to be influenced by circumstances appealing to the heart or imagination.

The whole city seems to partake of this peculiar character, and a traveller coming from New York is especially struck with it. It is not that the streets of Boston are less crowded, the public places less frequented, or that the business of life is less energetically pursued. In all these matters, to the eye of a stranger, there is little perceptible difference. But the population is evidently more orderly; the conventional restrictions of society are more strictly drawn, and even the lower orders are distinguished by a solemnity of demeanour, not observable in their more southern 206 neighbours. A shopkeeper weighs coffee or measures tape with the air of a philosopher; makes observations on the price or quality in a tone of sententious sagacity; subjects your coin to a sceptical scrutiny, and as you walk off with your parcel in your pocket, examines you from top to toe, in order to gain some probable conclusion as to your habits or profession.

Boston is quiet, but there is none of the torpor of still life about it. Nowhere are the arts of money getting more deeply studied or better understood. There is here less attempt than elsewhere to combine pleasure and business, simply because to a New Englander business *is* pleasure—indeed, the only pleasure he cares much about. An English shopkeeper is a tradesman all the morning, but a gentleman in the evening. He casts his slough like a snake, and steps into it again, only when he crosses the counter. Tallow, dry goods, and tobacco are topics specially eschewed in the drawingrooms of Camberwell and Hackney, and all talk about sales and bankruptcies is considered a violation of the *bienséances* at Broadstairs and Margate. In short, an English tradesman is always solicitous to *cut the shop* whenever he can 207 do so with impunity, and it often happens that an acute observer of manners can detect a man's business rather by the topics he betrays anxiety to avoid, than those on which he delivers his opinion.

There is some folly in all this, but there is likewise some happiness. Enough, and too much, of man's life is devoted to business and its cares, and it is well that at least a portion of it should be given to enjoyment, and the cultivation of those charities, which constitute the redeeming part of our nature. The follies of mankind have at least the advantage of being generally social, and connected with the happiness of others as well as with our own. But the pursuits of avarice and ambition are selfish; their object is the attainment of solitary distinction, and the depression of competitors is no less necessary to success, than the positive elevation of the candidate. The natural sympathies of humanity are apt to wither in the hearts of men engrossed by such interests. Even the vanities and follies of life have their use in softening the asperities of contest, and uniting men in their weakness, who would willingly stand apart in their strength. It is good, therefore, that the lawyer 208 should sometimes forget his briefs, and the merchant his “argosies,” and his money-bags; that the poor man should cast off the memory of his sweat and his sufferings, and find even in frivolous amusements, a Sabbath of the sterner passions.

But such Sabbath the New Englander rarely knows. Wherever he goes the coils of business are around him. He is a sort of moral Laocoon, differing only in this, that he makes no struggle to be free. Mammon has no more zealous worshipper than your true Yankee. His homage is not merely that of the lip, or of the knee; it is an entire prostration of the heart—the devotion of all powers, bodily and mental, to the service of the idol. He views the world but as one vast exchange, on which he is impelled, both by principle and interest, to over-reach his neighbours if he can. The thought of business is never absent from his mind. To him there is no enjoyment without traffic. He travels snail-like, with his shop or his counting-house on his back, and, like other hawkers, is always ready to open his budget of little private interests for discussion or amusement. The only respite he enjoys from the consideration of his 209 own affairs, is the time he is pleased to bestow on prying into yours. In regard to the latter, he evidently considers that he has a right to unlimited sincerity. There is no baffling him. His curiosity seems to rise in proportion to the difficulty of its gratification: he will track you through every evasion—detect all your

doublings—or, if thrown out, will hark back so skilfully on the scent, that you are at length fairly hedged in a corner, and are tempted to exclaim, in the words of the most gifted of female poets,—

“The devil damn thy question-asking spirit; For when thou takest a notion by the skirt, Thou, like an English bull-dog, keepest thy hold, And wilt not let it go.”

Their puritan descent has stamped a character on the New Englanders, which nearly two centuries have done little to efface. Among their own countrymen they are distinguished for their enterprise, prudence, frugality, order, and intelligence. Like the Jews, they are a marked people, and stand out in strong relief from the population which surrounds them. I imagine attachment to republicanism to be VOL. I S 210 less fervent in this quarter of the Union than in any other. The understanding of a Yankee is not likely to be run away with by any political plausibilities, and concerns itself very little about evils which are merely speculative. He is content when he feels a grievance to apply a remedy, and sets about the work of reform, with none of that revolutionary fury, which has so often marred the fairest prospects of the philanthropist. Since the establishment of their independence, the representatives of these States have almost uniformly advocated in Congress the principles of Washington, Hamilton, and Adams, and rather regarded with apprehension the democratic tendencies of the constitution, than the dangers which might result from increase of power on the part of the executive.

This is the more remarkable, as the constitutions of most of the New England States are in truth republican in a degree verging on democracy. In New Hampshire, the governor, council, senators, and representatives, are all elected annually by the people. In Vermont, there is only one legislative body, which, along with the governor and council, and *judges* , is 5 211 chosen annually. Rhode Island, strange to say, has no written constitution at all, and the inhabitants find it very possible to live in perfect comfort and security without one. The custom is, however, to have judges, governor, and senate, who are chosen annually. The representatives serve only for *six months!* In Massachusetts, the governor

and Legislative Bodies are annually chosen—the judges, however, hold their offices *ad vitam aut culpam.* In the States of Maine and Connecticut, the Executive and Legislative Bodies are appointed annually; the Judiciary is permanent. In all these states, the right of suffrage, with some few restrictions in regard to paupers, &c., is universal.

In contrast with this, it may be curious to take a glance at the constitution of Virginia, the native state of Washington, Jefferson, Madison, and Munroe, which has always been remarkable in the Federal Congress for the assertion of the highest and purest principles of republicanism. It must be observed, however, that, until 1829, the right of suffrage depended on a much higher territorial qualification than at present. In that year, the constitution was 212 remodelled and liberalized by a convention of the inhabitants.

There are in Virginia two Legislative Bodies. The members of the Lower House are chosen annually, the senators every *four* years. These houses, by a joint vote, elect the governor, who remains in office *three* years. The judges are during good behaviour, or until removed by a concurrent vote of both houses, two-thirds being required to constitute the necessary majority. The right of suffrage is vested in every citizen *possessed of a freehold of the annual value of twenty-five dollars* , or who has *a life-interest in land of the annual value of fifty dollars* , or who shall own or occupy *a leasehold estate of the annual value of two hundred dollars, &c.*

There is thus presented the anomaly of the most democratic state of the Union adhering to a constitution comparatively aristocratic, and appending to the right of suffrage a high territorial qualification; while the New England States, with institutions more democratic than have ever yet been realized in any other civilized community, are distinguished as the advocates of a strong federal legislature, a productive 213 system of finance, the establishment of a powerful navy, and such liberal expenditure at home and abroad, as might tend to ensure respect and influence to the government.

The truth seems to be, that the original polity of these States partook of the patriarchal character, and has not yet entirely lost its hold on the feelings of the people. It was easy to maintain order in a country where there was little temptation to crime; where, by a day's labour, a man could earn the price of an acre of tolerable land, and becoming a territorial proprietor, of course, immediately partook of the common impulse, to maintain the security of property. Add to this the character of the people; their apathetic temperament, their habits of parsimony, the religious impressions communicated by their ancestors, and, above all, the vast extent of fertile territory which acted as an escape-valve for the more daring and unprincipled part of the population, and we shall have reasons enough, I imagine, why the New Englanders could bear, without injury, a greater degree of political liberty than perhaps any other people in the world.

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But though the New Englanders had little apprehension of glaring violations of law within their own territory, they had evidently no great confidence in the wisdom or morality of their neighbours. They were, therefore, in favour of a federal legislature, strong enough to command respect, and maintain order throughout the Union. Constituting a small minority of the confederated States, yet for long subsequent to the Revolution, possessing by far the greater share of the national capital, they felt that they had more to lose than those around them, and were consequently more solicitous to strengthen the guarantees of public order. They would, therefore, have been better satisfied had greater influence been given to property, and would gladly have seen the senate so constituted, as to act as a check on the hasty impulses of the more popular chamber. Within their own limits there was no risk of domestic disturbance. The most wealthy capitalist felt, that from the citizens of his own province he had nothing to apprehend. But it was to the federal legislature alone, that they could look for security from without, and they were naturally anxious that this body should 215 be composed of men with a deep interest in the stability of the Union, and representing rather the deliberate opinions of their more intelligent constituents, than the hasty and variable impressions of the ignorant and vulgar.

The New England States have something approaching to a religious establishment. In Massachusetts, Vermont, New Hampshire, and Connecticut, the law requires each town to provide, by taxation, for the support of the *Protestant* religion, leaving, however, to every individual, the choice of the particular sect to which he will contribute. In the other States of the Union, every person is at liberty to act as he pleases in regard to religion, which is regarded solely as a relation between man and his Maker, and any compulsory contribution would be considered a direct encroachment on personal liberty. But if Christianity be a public benefit; if it tend to diminish crime and encourage the virtues essential to the prosperity of a community, it is difficult to see on what grounds its support and diffusion should not form part of the duties of a legislature.

In these States, the education of the people is likewise 216 the subject of legislative enactment. In Massachusetts, public schools are established in every district, and supported by a tax levied on the public. In Connecticut they are maintained in another manner. By the charter of Charles the Second, this colony extended across the Continent to the Pacific, within the same parallels of latitude which bound it on the East. It therefore included a large portion of the present States of Pennsylvania and Ohio, which being sold, produced a sum amounting to L.270,000 sterling, the interest of which is exclusively devoted to the purposes of education throughout the State. This fund is now largely increased, and its annual produce, I believe, is greater than the whole income of the State arising from taxation.

In these public schools every citizen has not only a right to have his children educated, but, as in some parts of Germany, he is compelled by law to exercise it. It is here considered essential to the public interest that every man should receive so much instruction as shall qualify him for a useful member of the State. No member of society can be considered as an isolated and abstract being, living for his own pleasure, and 217 labouring for his own advantage. In free States, especially, every man has important political functions, which affect materially not only his own well-being but that of his

fellow-citizens; and it is surely reasonable to demand that he shall at least possess such knowledge as shall render it possible for him to discharge his duties with advantage to the community. The policy which attempts to check crime by the diffusion of knowledge, is the offspring of true political wisdom. It gives a security to person and property, beyond that afforded by the law, and looks for the improvement of the people, not to the gibbet and the prison, but to increased intelligence, and a consequently keener sense of moral responsibility.

Speaking generally, it may be said that every New Englander receives the elements of education. Reading and writing, even among the poorest class, are universally diffused; arithmetic, I presume, comes by instinct among this guessing, reckoning, expecting, and calculating people. The schoolmaster has long been abroad in these States, deprived, it is true, of his rod and ferule, but still most usefully employed. Up to a certain point he has done wonders; he has VOL. I T 218 made his scholars as wise as himself, and it would be somewhat unreasonable to expect more. If it be considered desirable, however, that the present range of popular knowledge should be enlarged, the question then arises, who shall teach the schoolmaster? Who shall impress a pedagogue (on the best terms with himself, and whose only wonder is, “that one small head should carry all he knows”) with a due sense of his deficiencies, and lead him to admit that there are more things between heaven and earth than are dreamt of in his philosophy? A New Englander passes through the statutory process of education, and enters life with the intimate conviction that he has mastered, if not the *omne scibile* , at least every thing valuable within the domain of intellect. It never occurs to him as possible, that he may have formed a wrong conclusion on any question, however intricate, of politics or religion. He despises all knowledge abstracted from the business of the world, and prides himself on his stock of practical truths. In mind, body, and estate, he believes himself the first and noblest of God's creatures. The sound of triumph is ever on his lips, and, like a man who has mounted the first 219 step of a ladder, it is his pride to look down on his neighbours, whom

he overtops by an inch, instead of directing his attention to the great height yet to be surmounted.

This folly, indeed, is not peculiar to the New Englander, though in him it is more strongly marked than in the inhabitants of the other States. It enters into the very essence of his character; it is part and parcel of him, and its eradication would involve an entire change of being. “A blessing be on him who first invented sleep,” says Sancho Panza, “for it covers a man all over like a cloak.” And even so Jonathan may bless his vanity. He is encased in it from top to toe; it is a panoply of proof, which renders him equally invulnerable to ridicule and argument.

If to form a just estimate of ourselves and others be the test of knowledge, the New Englander is the most ignorant of mankind. There is a great deal that is really good and estimable in his character, but, after all, he is not absolutely the ninth wonder of the world. I know of no benefit that could be conferred on him equal to convincing him of this truth. He 220 may be assured that the man who knows nothing, and is aware of his ignorance, is a wiser and more enviable being than he who knows a little, and imagines that he knows all. The extent of our ignorance is a far more profitable object of contemplation than that of our knowledge. Discontent with our actual amount of acquirement is the indispensable condition of possible improvement. It is to be wished that Jonathan would remember this. He may rely on it, that he will occupy a higher place in the estimation of the world, whenever he has acquired the wisdom to think more humbly of himself.

The New England free-schools are establishments happily adapted to the wants and character of the people. They have been found to work admirably, and too much praise cannot be bestowed on the enlightened policy which, from the very foundation of the colony, has never once lost sight of the great object of diffusing education through every cottage within its boundaries. It will detract nothing from the honour thus justly due, to mention that the establishment of district schools was not an original achievement of New England intelligence. The 221 parish-schools of Scotland (to say nothing of Germany) had

existed long before the pilgrim fathers ever knelt in worship beneath the shadows of the hoary forest trees. The principle of the establishments in both countries is the same, the only difference is in the details. In Scotland the land-owners of each parish contribute the means of education for the body of the people. The school-house and dwelling-house of the master are provided and kept in repair by an assessment on the land, which is likewise burdened with the amount of his salary.

It has been an object, however, wisely kept in view, that instruction at these seminaries shall not be wholly gratuitous. There are few even of the poorest order in Scotland who would not consider it a degradation to send their children to a charity-school, and the feeling of independence, is perhaps the very last which a wise legislator will venture to counteract. It is to be expected, too, that when the master depends on the emolument to be derived from his scholars, he will exert himself more zealously than when his remuneration arises from a source altogether independent 222 of his own efforts. The sum demanded from the scholars, however, is so low, that instruction is placed within the reach of the poorest cottager; and instances are few indeed, in which a child born in Scotland is suffered to grow up without sufficient instruction to enable him to discharge respectably the duties of the situation he is destined to fill.

When Mr Brougham, however, brought forward in the British Parliament his plan of national education, which consisted mainly in the establishment throughout the kingdom of parish-schools, similar to those in Scotland, one of the most eminent individuals of the Union* did not hesitate to arrogate the whole merit of the precedent for New England. I have more than once since my arrival heard Mr Brougham accused of unworthy motives, in not publicly confessing that his whole project was founded on the example set forth for imitation in this favoured region. It was in vain that I pleaded the circumstances above stated, the company were evidently determined to believe

* Mr Webster, in his speech delivered at Plymouth, in commemoration of the first settlement of New England,

223 their own schools without parallel in the world, and the Lord Chancellor will assuredly go down to his grave unabsolved from this weighty imputation.

In character there are many points of resemblance between the Scotch and New Englanders. There is the same sobriety, love of order, and perseverance in both; the same attachment to religion, mingled with more caution in Saunders, and more enterprise in Jonathan. Both are the inhabitants of a poor country, and both have become rich by habits of steady industry and frugality. Both send forth a large portion of their population to participate in the wealth of more favoured regions. The Scot, however, never loses his attachment to his native land. It has probably been to him a rugged nurse, yet, wander where he will, its heathy mountains are ever present to his imagination, and he thinks of the bleak muirland cottage in which he grew from infancy to manhood, as a spot encircled by a halo of light and beauty. Whenever fortune smiles on him, he returns to his native village, and the drama of his life closes where it commenced.

There is nothing of this local attachment about the 224 New Englander. His own country is too poor and too populous to afford scope for the full exercise of his enterprise and activity. He therefore shoulders his axe, and betakes himself to distant regions; breaks once and for ever all the ties of kindred and connexion, and without one longing lingering look, bids farewell to all the scenes of his infancy.

In point of morality, I must be excused for giving the decided preference to my countrymen. The Scotch have established throughout the world a high character for honesty, sobriety, and steady industry. Jonathan is equally sober and industrious, but his reputation for honesty is at a discount. The whole Union is full of stories of his cunning frauds, and of the impositions he delights to perpetrate on his more simple neighbours. Whenever his love of money comes in competition with his zeal for religion, the latter is sure to give way. He will insist on the scrupulous observance of the Sabbath, and cheat his customer on the Monday morning. His life is a comment on the text, *Qui festinat diteseere, non erit innocens.* The whole race of Yankee pedlars, in particular, are

proverbial for dishonesty. These go forth annually in thousands 225 to lie, cog, cheat, swindle, in short, to get possession of their neighbour's property, in any manner it can be done with impunity. Their ingenuity in deception is confessedly very great. They warrant broken watches to be the best time-keepers in the world; sell pinchbeck trinkets for gold; and have always a large assortment of wooden nutmegs, and stagnant barometers. In this respect they resemble the Jews, of which race, by the by, I am assured, there is not a single specimen to be found in New England. There is an old Scotch proverbs “Corbies never pick out corbies' een.”

The New Englanders are not an amiable people. One meets in them much to approve, little to admire, and nothing to love. They may be disliked, however, but they cannot be despised. There is a degree of energy and sturdy independence about them, incompatible with contempt. Abuse them as we may, it must still be admitted they are a singular and original people. Nature, in framing a Yankee, seems to have given him double brains, and half heart.

Wealth is more equally distributed in the New England States, than perhaps in any other country of 226 the world. There are here no overgrown fortunes. Abject poverty is rarely seen, but moderate opulence everywhere. This is as it should be. Who would wish for the introduction of the palace, if it must be accompanied by the Poor's-house?*

* The observations on the New England character in the present chapter, would perhaps have been more appropriately deferred till a later period of the work. Having written them, however, they must now stand where chance has placed them. I have only to beg they may be taken, not as the hasty impressions received during a few days or weeks' residence in Boston, but as the final result of my observations on this interesting people, both in their own States, and in other portions of the Union.

This observation is equally applicable to the opinions expressed in different parts of these volumes, and I must request the reader to be good enough to bear it in mind.

There are few beggars to be found in the streets of Boston, but some there are, both there and at New York. These, however, I am assured, are all foreigners, or people of colour, and my own observations tend to confirm the assertion. Nine-tenths of those by whom I have been importuned for charity, were evidently Irish. The number of negroes in Boston is comparatively small. The servants, in the better houses at least, are generally whites, but I have not been able to discover that the prejudices which, in the 227 other States, condemn the poor African to degradation, have been at all modified or diminished by the boasted intelligence of the New Englanders.

Though the schoolmaster has long exercised his vocation in these States, the fruit of his labours is but little apparent in the language of his pupils. The amount of bad grammar in circulation is very great; that of barbarisms enormous. Of course, I do not now speak of the operative class, whose massacre of their mother-tongue, however inhuman, could excite no astonishment; but I allude to the great body of lawyers and traders; the men who crowd the exchange and the hotels; who are to be heard speaking in the courts, and are selected by their fellow-citizens to fill high and responsible offices. Even by this educated and respectable class, the commonest words are often so transmogrified as to be placed beyond the recognition of an Englishman. The word *does* is split into two syllables, and pronounced *do-es. Where* , for some incomprehensible reason, is converted into *whare* , *there* into *thare;* and I remember, on mentioning to an acquaintance that I had called on a gentleman of taste in the arts, he asked, “Whether he *shew* (showed) 228 me his pictures.” Such words as oratory and dilatory, are pronounced with the penult syllable long and accented; missionary becomes *missionairy* , angel, *ângel* , danger, *dânger* , &c.

But this is not all. The Americans have chosen arbitrarily to change the meaning of certain old and established English words, for reasons which they cannot explain, and which I doubt much whether any European philologist could understand. The word *clever* affords a case in point. It has here no connexion with talent, and simply means pleasant or amiable. Thus a good-natured blockhead in the American vernacular, is a *clever* man, and having

had this drilled into me, I foolishly imagined that all trouble with regard to this word at least, was at an end. It was not long, however, before I heard of a gentleman having moved into a *clever* house—of another succeeding to a *clever* sum of money—of a third embarking in a *clever* ship, and making a *clever* voyage, with a *clever* cargo; and of the sense attached to the word in these various combinations, I could gain nothing like satisfactory explanation.

With regard to the meaning intended to be conveyed 229 by an American in conversation, one is sometimes left utterly at large. I remember, after conversing with a very plain, but very agreeable lady, being asked whether Mrs—was not *a very fine woman.* I believe I have not more conscience than my neighbours in regard to a compliment, but in the present case there seemed something so ludicrous in the application of the term, that I found it really impossible to answer in the affirmative. I therefore ventured to hint, that the personal charms of Mrs—were certainly not her principal attraction, but that I had rarely enjoyed the good fortune of meeting a lady more pleasing and intelligent. This led to an explanation; and I learned that in the dialect of this country, the term *fine woman* refers exclusively to the intellect.

The privilege of barbarising the King's English is assumed by all ranks and conditions of men. Such words as *slick, kedge* , and *boss* , it is true, are rarely used by the better orders; but they assume unlimited liberty in the use of “expect,” “reckon,” “guess,” “calculate,” and perpetrate conversational anomalies with the most remorseless impunity. It were easy to 230 accumulate instances, but I will not go on with this unpleasant subject; nor should I have alluded to it, but that I deem it something of a duty to express the natural feeling of an Englishman, at finding the language of Shakspeare and Milton thus gratuitously degraded. Unless the present progress of change be arrested, by an increase of taste and judgment in the more educated classes, there can be no doubt that, in another century, the dialect of the Americans will become utterly unintelligible to an Englishman, and that the nation will be cut off from the advantages arising from their participation in British literature. If they contemplate such an event with complacency, let them go on and

prosper; they have only to “ *progress* ” in their present course, and their grandchildren bid fair to speak a jargon as novel and peculiar as the most patriotic American linguist can desire.

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CHAPTER VIII. NEW ENGLAND.

Having directed the attention of the reader to some of the more prominent defects of the New England character, it is only justice to add, that in Boston at least, there exists a circle almost entirely exempt from them. This is composed of the first-rate merchants and lawyers, leavened by a small sprinkling of the clergy, and, judging of the quality of the ingredients, from the agreeable effect of the mixture, I should pronounce them excellent. There is much taste for literature in this circle; much liberality of sentiment, a good deal of accomplishment, and a greater amount, perhaps, both of practical and speculative knowledge, than the population of any other mercantile city could supply. In such society it is 232 possible for an Englishman to express his opinions without danger of being misunderstood, and he enjoys the advantage of free interchange of thought, and correcting his own hasty impressions by comparison with the results of more mature experience and sounder judgment.

It certainly struck me as singular, that while the great body of the New Englanders are distinguished above every other people I have ever known by bigotry and narrowness of mind, and an utter disregard of those delicacies of deportment which indicate benevolence of feeling, the higher and more enlightened portion of the community should be peculiarly remarkable for the display of qualities precisely the reverse. Nowhere in the United States will the feelings, and even prejudices of a stranger, meet with such forbearance as in the circle to which I allude. Nowhere are the true delicacies of social intercourse more scrupulously observed, and nowhere will a traveller mingle in society, where his errors of opinion will be more rigidly detected or more charitably excused. I look back on the period of my residence in Boston with peculiar pleasure. I trust there are 233 individuals there

who regard me as a friend; and I know of nothing in the more remote contingencies of life, which I contemplate with greater satisfaction, than the possibility of renewing in this country, with at least some of the number, an intercourse which I found so gratifying in their own.

In externals, the society of Boston differs little from that of New York. There is the same routine of dinners and parties; and in both the scale of expensive luxury seems nearly equal. In Boston, however, there is more literature, and this circumstance has proportionally enlarged the range of conversation. An Englishman is a good deal struck in America with the entire absence of books, as articles of furniture. The remark, however, is not applicable to Boston. There, works of European literature, evidently not introduced for the mere purpose of display, are generally to be found, and even the drawingroom sometimes assumes the appearance of a library.

The higher order of the New Englanders offers no exception to that grave solemnity of aspect, which is VOL. I. U 234 the badge of all their tribe. The gentlemen are more given than is elsewhere usual, to the discussion of abstract polemics, both in literature and religion. There is a moral pugnacity about them, which is not offensive, because it is never productive of any thing like wrangling, and is qualified by a very large measure of philosophical tolerance. The well-informed Bostonian is a calm and deliberative being. His decision, on any point, may be influenced by interest, but not by passion. He is rarely contented, like the inhabitants of other states, with taking the plain and broad features of a case; he enters into all the refinements of which the subject is capable—discriminates between the plausible and the true—establishes the precise limits of fact and probability—and at once fixes on the weak point in the argument of his opponent. Of all men he is the least liable, I should imagine, to be misled by any general assertion of abstract principle. He uniformly carries into the business of common life a certain practical good sense, and never for a moment loses sight of the results of experience. In politics he will not consent

to *go the 235 whole hog* , or, in other words, to hazard a certain amount of present benefit, for the promise, however confident, of new and untried advantages.

Of the ladies of Boston I did not see much, and can therefore only speak in doubtful terms of the amount of their attractions. Unfortunately it is still less the fashion, than at New York, to enliven the dinner-table with their presence, and, during my stay, I was only present at one ball. But the impression I received was certainly very favourable. These fair New Englanders partake of the endemic gravity of expression, which sits well on them, because it is natural. In amount of acquirement, I believe they are very superior to any other ladies of the Union. They talk well and gracefully of novels and poetry, are accomplished in music and the living languages, and though the New York ladies charge them with being *dowdyish* in dress, I am not sure that their taste in this respect is not purer, as it certainly is more simple, than that of their fair accusers.

The habits of the Bostonians are, I believe, more domestic than is common in the other cities of the Union. The taste for reading contributes to this, 236 by rendering both families and individuals less dependent on society. A strong aristocratic feeling is apparent in the families of older standing. The walls of the apartments are often covered with the portraits of their ancestors, armorial bearings are in general use, and antiquity of blood is no less valued here than in England. The people, too, display a fondness for title somewhat at variance with their good sense in other matters. The governor of Massachusetts receives the title of Excellency. The President of the United States claims no such honour. The members of the Federal Senate are addressed generally in the northern States, with the prefixture of Honourable, but the New Englanders go further, and extend the same distinction to the whole body of representatives, a practice followed in no other part of the Union.

Such trifles often afford considerable insight to the real feelings of a people. Nowhere are mere nominal distinctions at so high a premium as in this republican country. Military titles are caught at with an avidity, which to an Englishman appears absolutely ridiculous.

The anomaly of learned majors at the bar addressing 237 learned colonels or generals on the bench is not uncommon, and as the privates of militia enjoy the privilege of electing their officers, of course the principle of choice is by no means the possession of military knowledge. In a thinly-peopled country, where candidates of a better class are not to be had, it must often happen, that the highest military rank is bestowed on men of the very lowest station in society. This circumstance, it might be expected, would bring this class of honours into disrepute, and that, like the title of knight-bachelor in England, they would be avoided by the better order of citizens. This, however, is by no means the case. Generals, colonels, and majors, swarm all over the Union, and the titular distinction is equally coveted by the President and the senator, the judge on the bench and the innkeeper at the bar.

There is far more English feeling in Boston than I was prepared to expect. The people yet feel pride in the country of their forefathers, and even retain somewhat of reverence for her ancient institutions. At the period of my visit, the topic of Parliamentary Reform was naturally one of peculiar interest. The 238 revolution in France had communicated a strong impulse to opinion in England, and the policy to be adopted by the ministry in regard to this great question, was yet unknown. The subject, therefore, in all its bearings, was very frequently discussed in the society of Boston. It was one on which I had anticipated little difference of opinion among the citizens of a republic. Admitting that their best wishes were in favour of the prosperity of Britain, and the stability of her constitution, I expected that their judgment would necessarily point to great and immediate changes in a monarchy confessedly not free from abuse. For myself, though considered, I believe, as something of a Radical at home, I had come to the United States prepared to bear the imputation of Toryism among a people whose ideas of liberty were carried so much further than my own.

In all these anticipations I was mistaken. Strange to say, I found myself quite as much a Radical in Boston, and very nearly as much so in New York, as I had been considered in England. It was soon apparent that the great majority of the more enlightened class in both cities, regarded any great and sudden 239 change in the British institutions as pregnant

with the most imminent danger. In their eyes the chance of ultimate advantage was utterly insignificant, when weighed against the certainty of immediate peril. “You at present,” they said, “enjoy more practical freedom than has ever in the whole experience of mankind been permanently secured to a nation by any institutions. Your government, whatever may be its defects, enjoys at least this inestimable advantage, that the habits of the people are adapted to it. This cannot be the case in regard to any change, however calculated to be ultimately beneficial. The process of moral adaptation is ever slow and precarious, and the experience of the world demonstrates that it is far better that the intelligence of a people should be in advance of their institutions, than that the institutions should precede the advancement of the people. In the former case, however theoretically bad, their laws will be practically modified by the influence of public opinion; in the latter, however good in themselves, they cannot be secure or beneficial in their operation. We speak as men whose opinions have been formed from experience, under a 240 government, popular in the widest sense of the term. As friends, we caution you to beware. We pretend not to judge whether change be necessary. If it be, we trust it will at least be gradual; that your statesmen will approach the work of reform, with the full knowledge that every single innovation will occasion the necessity of many. The appetite for change in a people grows with what it feeds on. It is insatiable. Go as far as you will, at some point you must stop, and that point will be short of the wish of a large portion—probably of a numerical majority —of your population. By no concession does it appear to us that you can avert the battle that awaits you. You have but the choice whether the great struggle shall be for reform or property.”

I own I was a good deal surprised by the prevalence of such opinions among the only class of Americans whose judgment as to matters of government, could be supposed of much value. As it was my object to acquire as much knowledge as possible with regard to the real working of the American constitution on the habits and feelings of the people, I was always glad to listen to political discussion between 2 241 enlightened disputants. This carried with it at least the advantage of affording an indication to the prevailing tone of

thought and opinion, in a condition of society altogether different from any within the range of European experience. At present I have only alluded to the subject of politics at all, as illustrative of a peculiar feature in the New England character. At a future period, I shall have occasion to view the subject under a different aspect.

The comparative diffusion of literature in Boston, has brought with it a taste for the fine arts. The better houses are adorned with pictures; and in the Athenæum—a public library and reading room—is a collection of casts from the antique. Establishments for the instruction of the people in the higher branches of knowledge, are yet almost unknown in the United States, but something like a Mechanic's Institute has at length been got up in Boston, and I went to hear the introductory lecture. The apartment was large, and crowded by an audience whose appearance and deportment were in the highest degree orderly and respectable. The lecture was on the steam-engine, VOL. I X 242 the history, principle, and construction of which were explained most lucidly by a lecturer, who belonged, I was assured, to the class of operative mechanics.

Boston can boast having produced some eminent artists, at the head of whom is Mr Alston, a painter, confessedly of fine taste, if not of high genius. His taste, however, unfortunately renders him too fastidious a critic on his own performances, and he has now been upwards of ten years at work on an historical subject, which is yet unfinished. This surely is mere waste of life and labour. Where a poet or painter has a strong grasp of his subject, he finds no difficulty in embodying his conceptions. The idea which requires years of fostering, and must be cherished and cockered into life, is seldom worth the cost of its nurture. Mr Alston should remember, that a tree is judged by the quantity as well as by the quality of its fruit. Had Raphael, Reubens, or Titian, adopted such a process of elaboration, how many of the noblest specimens of art would have been lost to the world!

I had the pleasure of becoming acquainted with Mr Harding, a painter of much talent, and very considerable genius. His history is a singular one. 243 During the last war with Great Britain, he was a private soldier, and fought in many of the battles on the frontier. At

the return of peace, he exchanged the sword for the pallet, and without instruction of any kind, attained to such excellence, that his pictures attracted much notice, and some little encouragement. But America affords no field for the higher walks of art, and Harding, with powers of the first order, and an unbounded enthusiasm for his profession, is not likely, I fear, to be appreciated as he deserves. Some years ago he visited England, where his talents were fast rising into celebrity, but the strength of the *amor patriœ* unfortunately determined him to return to his native land. I say unfortunately, because in England he could scarcely have failed of attaining both wider fame, and more liberal remuneration, than can well be expected in America. The modesty of this artist is no less remarkable than his genius. He uniformly judges his own performances by the highest standard of criticism, and is far rather disposed to exaggerate than extenuate their defects. Such a character of mind holds out high hopes of future achievement. In truth, even now, he is deficient in 244 nothing but a certain softness and finish, which time and a little practice will undoubtedly supply.

The better society of Boston, I imagine, is somewhat more exclusive than that of New York. Both pride of family, and pride of knowledge, contribute to this, though there is no public or apparent assertion of either. It is the custom on every Sunday evening for the different branches of a family to assemble at the house of one or other of its members. This generally produces a very social and agreeable party, and though a stranger, I was sometimes hospitably permitted to join the circle. It certainly at first appeared rather singular, that the Bostonians, who are strict observers of the Sabbath, should select that day for any festive celebration, however innocent. I learned, however, that on the literal interpretation of the assertion in Genesis, that “the evening and the morning were the first day,” the Sabbath is not observed as with us, from midnight to midnight, but from sunset to sunset. In conformity with this doctrine, the shops are generally closed at twilight on Saturday evening, and all business is suspended. Of course, after sunset on the day following, 245 they consider themselves discharged from further religious observance, and the evening is generally devoted to social intercourse.

Having passed nearly three weeks in Boston, it became necessary that I should direct my steps southward. I determined to return to New York by land, being anxious to see something of the country, and more than I had yet done of its inhabitants. The festivities of Christmas, therefore, were no sooner over, than I quitted Boston, with sentiments of deep gratitude, for a kindness, which, from the hour of my arrival, to that of my departure, had continued unbroken.

I have already described an American stage-coach. The one in which I now travelled, though distinguished by the title of “mail-stage,” could boast no peculiar attraction. It was old and rickety, and the stuffing of the cushions had become so conglomerated into hard and irregular masses, as to impress the passengers with the conviction of being seated on a bag of pebbles. Fortunately it was not crowded, and the road, though rough, was at least better than that on which I had been jolted on my journey from Providence. 246 It was one o'clock before we got fairly under weigh, and it is scarcely possible, I imagine, for a journey to commence under gloomier auguries. The weather was most dismal. The wind roared loudly among the branches of the leafless trees, and beat occasionally against the carriage in gusts so violent, as to threaten its overthrow. At length the clouds opened, and down came a storm of snow, which, in a few minutes, had covered the whole surface of the country, as with a winding-sheet.

The first night we slept at Worcester, a town containing about 3000 inhabitants, which the guide-book declares to contain a bank, four printing-offices, a court-house, and a gaol, assertions which I can pretend neither to corroborate nor deny. Its appearance, however, as I observed on the following morning, was far from unprepossessing; the streets were clean, and round the town stood neat and pretty-looking villas, which might have been still prettier, had they displayed less gaudy and tasteless decoration.

As the county court,—or some other,—was then sitting, the inn was crowded with lawyers and their clients, at least fifty of whom already occupied the 247 public *salon* , which was certainly not more than twenty feet square. The passengers were left to scramble out of

the coach as they best could in the dark, and afterwards to explore their way without the smallest notice, beyond that of a broad stare from the landlord. On entering the room, I stood for some time, in the hope that a party who engrossed the whole fire, would compassionate our half-frozen condition, and invite our approach. Nothing, however, was farther from their thoughts than such benevolence. “Friend, did you come by the stage?” asked a man immediately in my front, “I guess you found it tarnation cold.” I assured him his conjecture was quite correct, but the reply had not the effect of inducing any relaxation of the blockade. I soon observed, however, that my fellow-travellers elbowed their way without ceremony, and by adopting Rodney's manœuvre of cutting the line, had already gained a comfortable position in rear of the *cordon.* I therefore did not hesitate to follow their example, and pushing resolutely forward, at length enjoyed the sight and warmth of the blazing embers.

In about half an hour, the ringing of a bell gave 248 welcome signal of supper, and accompanying my fellow-passengers to the eating-room, we found a plentiful meal awaiting our appearance. On the score of fare there was certainly no cause of complaint. There were dishes of beaf-steaks—which in this country are generally about half the size of a newspaper—broiled fowl, ham, cold turkey, toast—not made in the English fashion, but boiled in melted butter—a kind of crumpet called waffles, &c. &c. The tea and coffee were poured out and handed by a girl with long ringlets and ear-rings, not remarkable for neatness of apparel, and who remained seated, unless when actually engaged in the discharge of her functions. Nothing could exceed the gravity of her expression and deportment, and there was an air of cool indifference about her mode of ministering to the wants of the guests, which was certainly far from prepossessing. This New England Hebe, however, was good-looking, and with the addition of a smile would have been pleasing.

Having concluded the meal, I amused myself on our return to the public room, by making observations on the company. The clamour of Babel could not 249 have been much worse than that which filled the apartment. I attempted to discriminate between lawyer and client, but the task was not easy. There was in both the same keen and callous expression of

worldly anxiety; the same cold selfishness of look and manner. The scene altogether was not agreeable; many of the company were without shoes, others without a cravat, and compared with people of the same class in England, they were dirty both in habit and person. It is always unpleasant to mingle in a crowd, with the consciousness that you have no sympathy or fellow-feeling with the individuals that com pose it. I therefore soon desisted from my task of observation, and having fully digested the contents of a Worcester newspaper, determined on retiring for the night.

The process in England in such circumstances, is to ring for the chambermaid, but in America there are no bells, and no chambermaids. You therefore walk to the bar, and solicit the favour of being supplied with a candle, a request which is ultimately, though by no means immediately, complied with. You then explore the way to your apartment unassisted, 250 and with about the same chance of success as the enterprising Parry in his hunt after the north-west passage. Your number is 63, but in what part of the mansion that number is to be found, you are of course without the means of probable conjecture. Let it be supposed, however, that you are more fortunate than Captain Parry, and at length discover the object of your search. If you are an Englishman, and too young to have roughed it under Wellington, you are probably, what in this country is called “almighty particular;” and rejoice in a couple of comfortable pillows, to say nothing of a lurking prejudice in favour of multiplicity of blankets, especially with the thermometer some fifty degrees below the freezing point. Such luxuries, however, it is ten to one you will not find in the uncurtained crib in which you are destined to pass the night. Your first impulse, therefore, is to walk down stairs and make known your wants to the landlord. This is a mistake. Have nothing to say to him. You may rely on it, he is much too busy to have any time to throw away in humouring the whimsies of a foreigner; and should it happen, as it does sometimes in the New England 251 States, that the establishment is composed of natives, your chance of a comfortable sleep for the night, is about as great as that of your gaining the Thirty Thousand pound prize in the lottery. But if there are black, and, still better, if there are Irish servants, your prospect of comfort is wonderfully improved.

A douceur, judiciously administered, generally does the business, and when you at length recline after the fatigues of the day, you find your head has acquired at least six inches additional elevation, and the superincumbent weight of woollen has been largely augmented.

It was at Worcester that I received this most useful information. Being in want of the above-mentioned accommodations, I deputed my servant to make an humble representation of my necessities to the landlord. The flinty heart of Boniface, however, was not to be moved. The young lady with the ringlets and ear-rings was no less inexorable, but, luckily for me, a coloured waiter was not proof against the eloquence of a quarter dollar. In five minutes the articles were produced, and as sailors say, “I tumbled in” for the 252 night, with a reasonable prospect of warmth and comfort.

After a good breakfast on the following morning, I felt again fortified for the perils and disagreeables of the mail-stage. Mr Harding, to whose merits as an artist I have already alluded, was fortunately a fellow-passenger, being on his way to join his family at Springfield. The only other passenger was a young lady, with an enormous band-box on her knee, to whom Mr Harding introduced me. There was something in this fair damsel and her band-box peculiarly interesting. She sat immediately opposite to me, but nothing of her face or person was visible, except a forehead, a few dark ringlets, and a pair of the most beautiful eyes in the world, which, like the sun just peeping above the horizon, sent the brightest flashes imaginable, along the upper level of this Brobdignag of a band-box.

The snow had continued to fall during the night, and the jolting of the “mail-stage” was certainly any thing but agreeable. When out of humour, however, by the united influence of the weather and the road, 253 I had only to direct a single glance towards the beautiful orbs scintillating in my front, to be restored to equanimity. When any thing at all jocular was said, one could read a radiant laughter in this expressive feature, though her lips gave utterance to no sound of merriment. For about five hours the fair oculist continued our fellow-traveller, and I had at length come to think of her as some fantastic and

preternatural creation; such a being as one sometimes reads of in a German romance, half band-box, and half eye.

At length she left the coach. When her band-box was about to be removed from its position, I remember averting my face, lest a view of her countenance might destroy the fanciful interest she had excited. She departed, therefore, unseen; but those eyes will live in my memory, long after all record of her fellow-traveller shall have faded from hers.

After her departure, Harding told me her story; she was a young lady of respectable connexions, and with the consent of her family, had become engaged to a young man, who afterwards proved false to his vows, and married a wealthier bride. She had suffered 254 severely under this disappointment, and was then going on a visit to her aunt at Northampton, in the hope that change of scene might contribute to the restoration of her tranquillity. That this result would follow I have no doubt. Those eyes were too laughing and brilliant, to belong permanently to a languishing and broken-hearted maiden.

We dined at a tolerable inn, and proceeded on our journey. The snow had ceased; there was a bright sun above, but I never remember to have felt cold so intense. It was late before we reached Springfield, where I had determined on making a day's halt. The inn was comfortable, and I succeeded in procuring private apartments. On the following morning I took a ramble over the village, which is by far the gayest I had yet seen in the course of my tour. It abounds with white framework villas, with green Venetian blinds, and porticoes of Corinthian or Ionic columns sadly out of proportion. It appears to me, however, that massive columns—and columns not *apparently* massive at least, must be absurd—are sadly out of place when attached to a wooden building. When such fragile materials are employed, 255 *lightness* should be the chief object of the architect, but these Transatlantic Palladios seem to despise the antiquated notions of fitness and proportion which prevail in other parts of the world. They heap tawdry ornament upon their gingerbread creations, and you enter a paltry clapboard cottage, through—what is at least meant for—a splendid colonnade.

In the country through which I passed, the houses are nearly all of the class which may be called comfortable. The general scenery at a more favourable season I can easily conceive to be pretty. The chief defect is the utter flimsiness of the houses, and the glaring effect arising from the too profuse application of the paint-brush. They are evidently not calculated to last above fifteen or twenty years, and this extreme fragility renders more glaring the absurdity of that profusion of gewgaw decoration in which the richer inhabitants delight to indulge.

The country is too new for a landscape-painter. With variety of surface, and abundance of wood and water, an artist will certainly find many scenes worthy of his pencil, but the worm fences, and the freshness and regularity of the houses, are sadly destructive 256 of the picturesque. Had the buildings been of more enduring materials, time, the beautifier, would have gradually mellowed down their hardness of outline, and diminished the unpleasant contrast which is here so obtrusively apparent between the works of man and those of nature. But at present there is no chance of this. Each generation builds for itself, and even the human frame is less perishable than the rickety and flimsy structures erected for its comfort.

The advantages of a country, however, are not to be measured by the degree of gratification it may administer to the taste or imagination of a traveller. Where plenty is in the cottage, it matters but little what figure it may make on the canvass of the painter. I have travelled in many countries, but assuredly never in any, where the materials of happiness were so widely and plentifully diffused as in these New England States. And yet the people are not happy, or if they be, there is no faith in Lavater. Never have I seen countenances so furrowed by care as those of this favoured people. Both soul and body appear to have been withered up by the anxieties of life; and with all appliances of enjoyment within 257 their reach, it seems as if some strange curse had gone forth against them, which said, “Ye shall *not* enjoy.” One looks in vain here for the ruddy and jovial faces which in England meet us on every hand. The full, broad, and muscular frame; the

bold serenity of aspect; the smile, the laugh, the song, the dance,—let not a traveller seek these, or any indications of a light heart and a contented spirit in the New England States.

Let me not, however, be misunderstood. The distinction I would draw is simply this. The Englishman has the inclination to be happy, though not always the means of happiness at command. The New Englander, with a thousand blessings, is deficient in what outvalues them all, the disposition to enjoyment. He is *inter opes inops.*

Something of this misfortune, I have no doubt, is attributable to climate, but I cannot help believing it in a great degree hereditary. The pilgrim fathers were certainly not men of a very enviable temperament. Full of spiritual pride, needy, bigoted, superstitious, ignorant and despising knowledge, intolerant, fleeing from persecution in the Old World, and yet bringing VOL. I. Y 258 it to the New; such were the men to whom this people may trace many of their peculiarities. That they were distinguished by some of these qualities, was their misfortune; that they were marked by others, was their crime. They and their descendants spread through the wilderness, and solitude had not the effect of softening the asperities of faith or feeling. The spirit of social dependence was broken; and as ages passed on, and increase of population, and the pursuits of gain, induced them to collect in masses, the towns and villages became peopled with men of solitary habits, relying on their own, resources, and associating only for purposes of gain. Such, doubtless, the New Englanders were; and such they are now, to the observation of a stranger, who is conscious of no temptation to misrepresent them.

I own the character of the New Englanders is a subject on which I feel tempted to be prolix. In truth, it strikes me as so singular and anomalous,—so compounded of what is valuable and what is vile, that I never feel certain of having succeeded in expressing the precise combination of feeling which it inspires. As a philanthropist, I should wish them to 259 be less grasping and more contented with the blessings they enjoy, and would willingly barter a good deal of vanity, and a little substantial knavery, for an additional infusion of liberal sentiment, and generous feeling.

Springfield is the seat of one of the chief arsenals and manufactories of arms in the United States. An officer of artillery was good enough to conduct me over these. Every thing seemed well managed, and the machinery at all points very complete. About twelve or thirteen thousand muskets are produced annually. My conductor was a particularly well-informed and obliging person, who had lately returned from Europe, whither he had been sent to receive instruction in regard to the recent improvements in gunnery.

The officers of the United States army are better paid than the English. A captain receives about L.400 a-year, or about L.100 more than a lieutenant-colonel in our service. But there is this difference between the British army and that of the United States; no one can enter the latter for pleasure, or to enjoy the enviable privilege of wearing an epaulet 260 and an embroidered coat. The service is one of real and almost constant privation. The troops are scattered about in forts and garrisons in remote and unhealthy situations, and are never quartered, as with us, in the great cities. The principal stations are on the Canadian and Indian frontiers, and on the Mississippi, and I imagine the sort of life they lead there would not be greatly relished by his Majesty's Coldstream Guards, or the Blues. I confess I was rather surprised at the smallness of the United States army. It amounts only to 6000 men including all arms, and I was certainly not less astonished at the enormous proportion of desertions, which are no less than 1000 annually or one-sixth of the whole number. Desertions in the British army do not exceed one in a hundred.

On the following day the snow was so deep as to render the road impassable for coaches, so with the thermometer fifteen degrees below zero, I took a sleigh for Hartford, where, after a journey of five hours, we were deposited in safety. Hartford is a small and apparently a very busy town on the Connecticut river. It is rather remarkable as being the 261 seat of the celebrated convention, which, during the late war with Britain, threatened the dissolution of the Union.

I slept at Hartford. The inn was dirty, but this disadvantage was more than counterbalanced by its possession of an Irish waiter, to whom nothing was impossible, and

who bustled about in my behalf with an activity and good-will which fortunately it was not difficult to repay. The stage for Newhaven did not start till late on the following day, and I had all the morning on my hands. What to make of it I did not know; so I wandered about the town, saw the College and the New Exchange Buildings, and a church and a gaol, and a school, and the Charter Oak, and peeped into all the shops, and then returned to the inn with the assured conviction that Hartford is one of the stupidest places on the surface of the globe. I may as well, however, relate a circumstance which happened here, since it may perhaps throw some light on the New England character.

I had returned from my ramble, and was sitting near the stove in the public room, engaged in the dullest of all tasks, reading an American newspaper, 262 when a woman and a girl, about ten years old, entered, cold and shivering, having just been discharged from a Boston stage-coach. The woman was respectable in appearance, rather good-looking, and evidently belonging to what may in this country be called the middle class of society. She immediately enquired at what hour the steam-boat set off for New York, and, on learning that owing to the river being frozen up, it started from Newhaven, some thirty miles lower, she was evidently much discomposed, and informed the landlord, that expecting to meet the steamboat that morning at Hartford, her pocket was quite unprepared for the expense of a further land-journey, and the charges of various sorts necessarily occasioned by a day's delay on the road.

The landlord shrugged up his shoulders and walked off; the Irish waiter looked at her with something of a quizzical aspect, and an elderly gentleman, engaged like myself in reading a newspaper, raised his eyes for a moment, discharged his saliva on the carpet, and resumed his occupation. Though evidently without a willing audience, the woman continued her complaints; informed us she had left her husband in 263 Boston to visit her brother in New York; explained and re-explained the cause of her misfortune, and a dozen times at least concluded by an assurance,—of the truth of which the whole party were quite satisfied,—that she was sadly puzzled what to do.

In such circumstances, I know not whether it was benevolence, or a desire to put a stop to her detestable iteration, or a mingled motive compounded of both, that prompted me to offer to supply her with any money she might require. However, I did so, and the offer, though not absolutely refused, was certainly very ungraciously received. She stared at me, expressed no thanks, and again commenced the detail of her grievances, of which, repetition had something staled the infinite variety. I therefore left the apartment. Shortly after the sleigh for Newhaven drove up, and I had entirely forgotten the amiable sufferer and her pecuniary affliction, when she came up, and said, without any expression of civility, “You offered me money, I'll take it.” I asked how much she wished. She answered sixteen dollars, which I immediately ordered my servant to give her. Being a Scotchman, however, he took the 264 prudent precaution of requesting her address in New York, and received a promise that the amount of her debt should be transmitted to Bunker's on the following day.

A week passed after my arrival in New York, and I heard no more either of the dollars or my fellow-traveller, and being curious to know whether I had been cheated, I at length sent to demand repayment. My servant came back with the money. He had seen the woman, who expressed neither thanks nor gratitude; and on being asked why she had not fulfilled her promise to discharge the debt, answered that she could not be at the trouble of sending the money, for she supposed it was my business to ask for it. It should be added, that the house in which she resided, was that of her brother, a respectable shopkeeper in one of the best streets in New York, whose establishment certainly betrayed no indication of poverty.

The truth is, that the woman was very far from being a swindler. She was only a Yankee, and troubled with an indisposition—somewhat endemic in New England—to pay money. She thought, perhaps, that a man who had been so imprudent as to 265 lend to a stranger, might be so negligent as to forget to demand repayment. The servant might have lost her address; in short, it was better to take the chances, however small, of ultimately

keeping the money, than to restore it unasked. All this might be very sagacious, but it certainly was not very high-principled or very honest.

It was late before we reached Newhaven, and the greater part of the journey was performed in the dark. The inn was so crowded, that the landlord told me fairly he could not give me a bed. I then requested a sofa and a blanket, but with no greater success. However, he proved better than his word. I was shown to a sort of dog-hole without plaster, which I verily believe was the dormitory of the black waiter, who was displaced on my account. The smell of the bed was most offensive, the sheets were dirty, and the coverlid had the appearance of an old horse-cloth. The only other furniture in the apartment was a table and a wooden chair; no glass, no washingstand, no towels. These articles were promised in the morning, but they never came, though most importunately demanded. The heat of the crowded VOL. I. Z 266 sitting-room was intense; the temperature of the bedroom was in the opposite extreme. At length, driven from the former, I wrapped myself in my cloak, and sought slumber on the filthy mass of flock from which its usual sable occupant had been expelled.

Cold weather and strong odours are not favourable to sleep. In about two hours I arose, and exploring my way to the sitting-room, now untenanted, passed the rest of the night in a chair by the fire. The steam-boat was to start at five in the morning, and at half-past four several coaches drove up to convey the passengers to the quay. I saw nothing of Newhaven, and its associations in my memory are certainly far from pleasant. It was with satisfaction I reached the steam-boat, and bade farewell to it for ever.

The night concluded, however, more fortunately than it commenced. I procured a berth in the steamboat, and was only roused from a comfortable snoose by the announcement of breakfast, and the clatter of knives and plates which immediately succeeded it. Under such circumstances, I had experience enough 267 to know that no time was to be lost. There is a tide in the affairs of steam-passengers in America, which must be taken at the flood in order to lead either to breakfast or dinner. A minute, therefore, was enough to find

me seated at the table, and contributing my strenuous efforts to the work of destruction. Breakfast was succeeded by the still greater luxury of bason and towel, and when I went on deck, a few whiffs of a cigar, and the fine scenery of Long Island Sound, had the effect of obliterating all trace of the disagreeables of the night.

The voyage was pleasant and prosperous; the weather, though still cold, was clear, and before day closed, I again found myself at New York.

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CHAPTER IX. NEW YORK.

On the day after my arrival at New York, the city was thrown into a bustle by the intelligence that a packet from Liverpool had been telegraphed in the offing. Owing to the prevalence of contrary winds, an unusual period had elapsed without an arrival from Europe, and the whole population seemed agog for news. I dined that day with a friend; and as there was no party, and we were both anxious to receive the earliest intelligence, he proposed our walking to the News-room, and afterwards returning to wine and the dessert. On approaching the house, we found some thousands of people collected about the door, and in the window was exhibited a placard of the following import:—“Duke of Wellington and Ministry 269 resigned; Lord Grey, Premier; Brougham, Lord Chancellor,” &c.

It was impossible not to be struck with the extreme interest this intelligence excited. Here and there were groups of quidnuncs engaged in earnest discussion on the consequences of this portentous intelligence. Some anticipated immediate revolution; a sort of second edition of the Three Days of Paris. Others were disposed to think that Revolution, though inevitable, would be more gradual. A third party looked forward to the speedy restoration of the Duke of Wellington to power. But all partook of the pervading excitement, and the sensation produced by these changes in the government, could scarcely have been greater in Liverpool than in New York.

On the last night of the year there was a public assembly, to which I received the honour of an invitation. The ball-rooms were very tolerable, but the entrance detestable. It led close past the bar of the City Hotel; and the ladies, in ascending the stairs—which, by the by, were offensively dirty—must have been drenched with tobacco smoke. Within, however, 270 I found assembled a great deal of beauty. At seventeen, nothing can be prettier than a smiling damsel of New York. At twenty-two, the same damsel, metamorphosed into a matron, has lost a good deal of her attraction. I had never been in so large and miscellaneous a party before. I looked about for solecisms of deportment, but could detect none on the part of the ladies. There was, however, a sort of *Transatlanticism* about them; and even their numerous points of resemblance to my fair countrywomen, had the effect of marking out certain shadowy differences, to be felt rather than described.

There was certainly an entire absence of what the French call *l'air noble* ,—of that look of mingled elegance and distinction which commands admiration rather than solicits it. Yet the New York ladies are not vulgar. Far from it. I mean only to say that they are not precisely European; and with the possession of so much that is amiable and attractive, they may safely plead guilty to want of absolute conformity to an arbitrary standard, the authority of which they are not bound to acknowledge.

But what shall be said of the gentlemen? Why, 271 simply that a party of the new police, furnished forth with the requisite *toggery* , would have played their part in the ballroom, with about as much grace. There is a certain uncontrollable rigidity of muscle about an American, and a want of sensibility to the lighter graces of deportment, which makes him perhaps the most unhopeful of all the votaries of Terpsichore. In this respect the advantage is altogether on the side of the ladies. Their motions are rarely inelegant, and never grotesque. I leave it to other travellers to extend this praise to the gentlemen.

An American dandy is a being *sui generis.* He has probably travelled in Europe, and brought back to his own country, a large stock of second-rate fopperies, rings, trinkets, and gold chains, which he displays, evidently with full confidence in their powers of

captivation. For a season after his return he is all the fashion. He suggests improvements in quadrille dancing, and every flourish of his toe becomes the object of sedulous imitation. Tailors wait on him to request the privilege of inspecting his wardrobe. His untravelled companions regard with envy his profusion of jewellery and waistcoats of figured velvet. 272 He talks of “Dukes and Earls, and all their sweeping train; and garters, stars and coronets, appear” in his conversation, as if such things had been familiar to him from his infancy. In short, he reigns for a time the *Magnus Apollo* of his native town, and his decrees in all matters of taste are received as the oracles of the god.

But time passes on. The traveller has returned to the undignified drudgery of the counting-house; his coats, like his affectations, become threadbare, and are replaced by the more humble productions of native artists; later tourists have been the heralds of newer fashions and fopperies; his opinions are no longer treated with deference; he sinks to the level of other men, and the vulgar dandy is gradually changed into a plain American citizen, content with the comforts of life, without concerning himself about its elegances.

The ball was very pleasant; and one of its chief attractions undoubtedly was an excellent supper. The oyster-soup—a favourite dish in this part of the world—was all that Dr Kitchiner could have desired. Turkey, ham, terrapin—a sort of land-crab, on which 273 I have not ventured—jellies, creams, ices, fruit, hot punch, and cold lemonade, were in profusion. Having afterwards remained to witness some badly danced quadrilles, and the perpetration of the first gallopade ever attempted on the American continent, I returned to take “my pleasure in mine inn.”

It is the custom in New York, on the first day of the year, for the gentlemen to visit all their acquaintances; and the omission of this observance in regard to any particular family, would be considered as a decided slight. The clergy, also, hold a levee on this day, which is attended by their congregation. For my own part, I confess, I found the custom rather inconvenient, there being about thirty families, whose attentions rendered such an acknowledgment indispensable. Determined, however, to fail in nothing which could mark

my sense of the kindness of my friends, I ordered a coach, and set forth at rather an early hour on this task of visit-paying.

The first person on whom I waited was Dr Wainwright, the clergyman of Gracechurch, in whose society I had often experienced much pleasure. I found him attired in full canonicals, with a table 274 displaying a profusion of wine and cake, and busied in conversing and shaking hands with his parishioners. Having paid my compliments, I proceeded on my progress, and in the course of about four hours had the satisfaction of believing that I had discharged my duty, though not—as I afterwards remembered—without some omissions, which I trust my friends were good enough to forgive.

The routine is as follows: The ladies of a family remain at home to receive visits; the gentlemen are abroad, actively engaged in paying them. You enter, shake hands, are seated, talk for a minute or two on the topics of the day, then hurry off as fast as you can. Wine and cake are on the table, of which each visitor is invited to partake. The custom is of Dutch origin, and, I believe, does not prevail in any other city of the Union. I am told its influence on the social intercourse of families, is very salutary. The first day of the year is considered a day of kindness and reconciliation, on which petty differences are forgotten, and trifling injuries forgiven. It sometimes happens, that between friends long connected, a misunderstanding takes place. Each is too proud 275 to make concessions, alienation follows, and thus are two families, very probably, permanently estranged. But on this day of annual amnesty, each of the offended parties calls on the wife of the other, kind feelings are recalled, past grievances overlooked, and at their next meeting they take each other by the hand, and are again friends.

In company with a most intelligent and kind friend, who was lately mayor of the city, I visited the Navy yard at Brooklyn. Commodore Chauncey, the commander, is a fine specimen of an old sailor of the true breed. He has a good deal of the *Benbow* about him, and one can read in his open and weatherbeaten countenance, that it has long braved both the battle and the breeze. He took us over several men-of-war, and a frigate yet

on the stocks, which appeared the most splendid vessel of her class I had ever seen. American men-of-war are built chiefly of live oak, the finest and most durable material in the world.

Every thing in these navy yards is conducted with admirable judgment, for the plain reason,—as the Americans themselves assure me,—that the management 276 of the navy is a department in which the mob, everywhere else triumphant, never venture to interfere. There is good sense in this abstinence. The principles of government, which are applicable to a civil community, would make sad work in a man-of-war. The moment a sailor is afloat, he must forget all his democratic habits, and both in word and action cease to be a free man. Every ship is necessarily a despotism, and the existence of any thing like a deliberative body, is utterly incompatible with safety. The necessity of blind obedience is imperious, though it is not easy to understand how those accustomed to liberty and equality on shore, can readily submit to the rigours of naval discipline.

In the same excellent company I made the round of the most interesting public institutions of the city—the House of Refuge for juvenile delinquents, the Deaf and Dumb Asylum, and the Asylum for Lunatics. All are conducted with exemplary judgment and benevolence, exerted with an ardent and enlightened zeal for the general interests of humanity. The first of these institutions is particularly laudable, both 277 as respects its objects and management. It is an asylum for juvenile offenders of both sexes, who, by being thrown into the depraved society of a common gaol, would, in all probability, grow up into hardened, and incorrigible criminals. In this institution, they are taught habits of regular industry; are instructed in the principles of religion, and when dismissed, they enter the world with ample means at command of earning an honest livelihood.

The girls are generally bred up as sempstresses or domestic servants; and on quitting the institution, are uniformly sent to a part of the country, where their previous history is unknown. By this judicious arrangement they again start fair, with the full advantage of an unblemished character. The establishment seemed a perfect hive of industry.

The taste and talent of the boys is consulted in the choice of a trade. There were young carpenters and blacksmiths, and tailors and brushmakers, and Lilliputian artificers of various kinds, all busily engaged in their peculiar handicraft. Though looking at the details of the establishment with a critical eye, I could detect no 278 fault in any department. There can be no doubt, I think, that the philanthropy to which this institution is indebted for its origin and support, is of the most enlightened kind.

I have not yet spoken of the political parties in this country, and, in truth, the subject is so complicated with opinions continually varying, and interests peculiar to particular districts, and includes the consideration of so many topics, apparently unconnected with politics altogether, that I now enter on it with little expectation of making it completely intelligible to an English reader. Of course, all the world knows that the population of the Union is, or was, divided into two great parties, entitled Federalist and Republican. These terms, however, by no means accurately express the differences which divide them. Both parties are Federalist, and both Republican, but the former favour the policy of granting wider powers to the federal legislature and executive; of asserting their control over the State governments; of guarding the constitution against popular encroachment; in short, of strengthening the bonds of public union, and maintaining 279 a presiding power of sufficient force and energy, to overawe turbulence at home, and protect the national honour and interests abroad.

The Democratic Republican, on the other hand, would enlarge to the utmost extent the political influence of the people. He is in favour of universal suffrage; a dependent judiciary; a strict and literal interpretation of the articles of the constitution, and regards the Union simply as a voluntary league between sovereign and independent states, each of which possesses the inalienable right of deciding on the legality of the measures of the general government. The Federalist, in short, is disposed to regard the United States as one and indivisible, and the authority of the united government as paramount to every other jurisdiction. The Democrat considers the Union as a piece of mosaic, tesselated with stones of different colours, curiously put together, but possessing no other principle

of cohesion than that of mutual convenience. The one regards the right of withdrawing from the national confederacy as indefeasible in each of its members; the other denies the existence of such right, and maintains the federal 280 government to be invested with the power of enforcing its decrees within the limits of the Union.

During the period succeeding the revolution, New England, pre-eminent in wealth, population, and intelligence, gave her principles to the Union. The two first presidents were both Federalists, but their political opponents were rapidly increasing both in numbers and virulence, and even the services, the high name, and unsullied character of Washington, were not sufficient to protect him from the grossest and most slanderous attacks. Adams succeeded him, and certainly did something to merit the imputations which had been gratuitously cast on his predecessor. His sedition law was bad; the prosecutions under it were still worse, and in the very first struggle he was driven from office, to return to it no more.*

* Carey, in the Olive Branch, mentions a prosecution under this act, in which a New Jersey man was tried and punished for expressing a desire, that the wadding of a gun discharged on a festival day, “had singed or otherwise inflicted damage on” a certain inexpressible part of Mr Adams! After such a prosecution, one is only tempted to regret that the efficiency of the wish was not equal to its patriotism.

It is evident that a constitution, however precisely defined, must differ in its practical operation, according 281 to the principles on which it is administered. From the period of Jefferson's accession to power, a change in this respect took place. The government was then administered on democratic principles; a silent revolution was going forward; the principles, opinions, and habits of the people, all tended towards the wider extension of political rights; and at the conclusion of the war with England, the Federalists became at length convinced, that the objects for which they had so long been strenuously contending, were utterly unattainable. Farther contention, therefore, was useless. The name of Federalist had become odious to the people; it was heard no more. No candidate for

public favour ventured to come forward and declare his belief, that a government, which looked for support to the prejudices of the populace, was necessarily less secure and beneficial than one which represented the deliberate convictions of the wealthier and more enlightened.

The result of all this was, an apparent harmony of political principle throughout the Union. Open differences of opinion were no longer expressed, as to VOL. I. 2 A 282 the broad and fundamental doctrines of government. The ascendency of numbers, in opposition to that of property and intelligence, had been firmly established; the people, in the widest sense of the term, had been recognised as the only source of power and of honour; and the government, instead of being enabled to control and regulate the passions and prejudices of the multitude, were forced to adopt them as the guide and standard of their policy. They were compelled, in short, to propose the measures, and profess the principles most palatable to the people, instead of those which wider knowledge and keener sagacity might indicate as most for their advantage.

I remember one of my first impressions in the United States was that of surprise, at the harmony in regard to the great principles of government, which seemed to pervade all classes of the community. In every thing connected with men and measures, however, all was clamour and confusion. The patriot of one company was the scoundrel of the next, and to an uninterested observer, the praise and the abuse seemed both to rest on a foundation too narrow to afford support to such disproportionate superstructures. 283 Parties there evidently were, but it was not easy to become master of the distinctions on which they rested. I asked for the Federalists, and was told, that like the mammoth and the megatherion, they had become extinct, and their principles delighted humanity no longer. I asked for the Democrats, and was desired to look on the countenance of every man I met in the street. This puzzled me, for the principles of this exploded party, appeared, in my deliberate conviction, to be those most in accordance with political wisdom, and I had little faith in the efficacy of sudden conversions, either in politics or religion.

In such circumstances, instead of attempting to grope my way to a conclusion, by any dark and doubtful hypothesis, I determined to demand information from those best calculated to afford it. I therefore explained my difficulties to one of the most eminent individuals of the Union, whom I knew at least to have been formerly a Federalist. “How comes it,” I asked, “that the party which you formerly adorned by your talents and eloquence, is no longer to be found? Is it, that the progress of events, 284 increased experience, and more deliberate and enlightened views, have induced you to relinquish your former tenets; or, that still entertaining the same opinions, you are simply withheld by policy from expressing them?” His answer—in substance as follows—was too striking to be forgotten. “My opinions, and I believe those of the party to which I belonged, are unchanged; and the course of events in this country has been such, as to impress only a deeper and more thorough conviction of their wisdom. But in the present state of public feeling, we *dare not* express them. An individual professing such opinions, would not only find himself excluded from every office of public trust, within the scope of his reasonable ambition, but he would be regarded by his neighbours and fellow-citizens with an evil eye. His words and actions would become the objects of jealous and malignant scrutiny, and he would have to sustain the unceasing attacks of a host of unscrupulous and ferocious assailants. And for what object is his life to be thus embittered, and he is to be cut off from the common objects of honourable ambition? Why, for the satisfaction of expressing his adherence to an 285 obsolete creed, and his persuasion of the wisdom of certain doctrines of government, which his judgment assures him, are utterly impracticable in the present condition of society.”

When the Americans do agree, therefore, their unanimity is really *not* very wonderful, seeing it proceeds from the observance of the good old rule of punishing all difference of opinion. The consequence, however, has been, not the eradication of federal principles, but a discontinuance of their profession. The combatants fight under a new banner, but the battle is not less bitter on that account. There is no longer any question with regard to increase of power on the part of the general government; that has long since been decided; but the point of contention now is, whether it shall keep that authority with which

it is at present understood to be invested. But even this substantial ground of difference is rarely brought prominently forward in debate. The struggle generally is with regard to particular measures, involving many collateral interests, but which are felt to have a tendency to one side or the other.

Thus one great subject of discussion relates to the 2 286 power of the government to expend a portion of the national funds in internal improvements. In 1830, a bill which had passed the legislature for the construction of a national road, was returned with the veto of the President. By the articles of the constitution, the federal legislature is invested with the power of “establishing post-offices and post-roads.” The doubt is, whether the word *establish* , gives the privilege to *construct* , or is to be understood as simply granting authority to convert into post-roads, thoroughfares already in existence. A principle of great importance is no doubt involved in this question, since by it must be decided whether the federal government have the power of adopting any general system of improvements, or of executing public works with a view to the national advantage. The existence of such a power would no doubt materially tend to strengthen its influence, and this, which is a recommendation with one party, constitutes the chief objection with the other. General Jackson is the leading champion on the one side; Mr Clay, his opponent for the Presidency, on the other. The latter is backed by the Northern and a considerable portion 287 of the Central States; the former, by the Southern and Western.

There can be no doubt, I imagine, that the Federalists, in supporting the affirmative of this question, are influenced by the *tendency* of the opinions they advocate, to enlarge and strengthen the power of the executive, but the grounds on which they attempt to gain proselytes are entirely collateral. They urge the general expediency of such a power; the impossibility of inducing the legislatures of the different States to concur heartily in any one project for the benefit of the whole; the necessity of unity of execution, as well as unity of design; and the probability, that if such improvements are not undertaken by the federal government, they will never be executed at all.

Of course, such questions as the Tariff, and that of which I have just spoken, are not exclusively decided by political principle. Private interest steps in; many of the democratic party adopt the views of their opponents on some single question of policy, and where that is of great importance, range themselves under the same banner. Thus a candidate for Congress is often supported by men differing on many questions, 288 and agreeing only in one. Commercial men are usually in favour of the system of internal improvements, because these must generally bring with them increased facilities for commerce. A new road may open a new market; the deepening of a harbour may change the whole aspect of a province; and those, who by their local position or pursuits are more immediately interested in these benefits, may be pardoned, if, on an occasion of such moment, they lay aside their principles, and act on the narrower and stronger motive of personal advantage.

In a country of such extraordinary extent as the United States, there are of course a vast number of local interests, which modify the application of theoretical principle. In the representative of each district, some peculiarity of creed is commonly necessary to secure the support of his constituents. Conformity on leading points of opinion is not enough; there is almost always some topic, however unconnected with politics, on which coincidence of sentiment is demanded. I may quote a striking instance of this in the State of New York.

Some years ago a man of the name of Morgan, 289 who wrote a book revealing the secrets of Free-Masonry, was forcibly carried off, and murdered. Of the latter fact there is no direct proof, but it is impossible to account for the circumstances on any other supposition, He is known to have been conveyed to the neighbourhood of Niagara, and there is evidence of his having passed a night there; but from that period to the present, no traces of the unfortunate man have ever been discovered. Of course the vigilance of justice was aroused by this outrage. The public prosecutor was long unsuccessful in his attempts to bring the criminals to trial. At length, however, strong circumstantial evidence was obtained, which went to fix participation in the crime on certain individuals. They were

brought to trial. A majority of the jury had no doubt of their guilt, but the minority thought otherwise, and the men were acquitted.

The circumstance of the jurymen who procured the acquittal being Free-Masons, contributed to inflame the public indignation, already strongly excited by the original outrage. The principles of this secret society had not only caused crime to be committed, but justice to be denied. Unquestionably Free-Masonry VOL. I. 2 B 290 had given rise to murder, and as unquestionably, in the opinion of many, its influence had secured impunity to the offenders. The question thus arose,—is a society which produces such consequences to be tolerated in a Christian community? A large portion of the people banded together in hostility to all secret and affiliated societies. They pronounced them dangerous and unconstitutional, and pledged themselves to exert their utmost efforts for their suppression.

The Masons, on the other hand, were a widely ramified and powerful body, embracing in their number nearly half the population of the State. Their constitution gave them the advantage of unity of purpose and of action. The keenness of contest, of course, excited the passions of both parties. The public press ranged itself on different sides; every candidate for office was compelled to make confession of his creed on this important subject, and to fight under the banner of one party or the other; and the distinction of Mason or Anti-Mason superseded, if it did not extinguish, those arising from differences more legitimately political. In the late elections the Masonic 291 party were triumphant; but the struggle is still carried on with vigour, and there is no doubt that the votes in the next presidential election will be materially affected by it. Indeed the mania on this subject is daily spreading. It was at first exclusively confined to the State of New York, it is now becoming diffused over the New England States and Pennsylvania.

It is such collateral influences which puzzle an Englishman, when he attempts to become acquainted with the state of parties in this country. He looks for the broad distinction of political principle, and he finds men fighting about Masonry, or other matters which have

no apparent bearing on the great doctrines of government. He finds general opinions modified by local interests, and seeks in vain to discover some single and definite question which may serve as a touchstone of party distinctions. It is only by acute and varied observation, and by conversation with enlightened men of all parties, that he is enabled to make due allowance for the variations of the political compass, and judge accurately of the course which the vessel is steering.

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The Americans have a notion that they are a people not easily understood, and that to comprehend their character requires a long apprenticeship of philosophical observation, and more both of patience and liberality than are usually compatible with the temper and prejudices of foreign travellers. This is a mistake. The peculiarities of the Americans lie more on the surface than those of any people I have ever known. Their features are broad and marked; there exists little individual eccentricity of character, and it is in their political relations alone that they are difficult to be understood. One fact, however, is confessed by all parties, that the progress of democratic principles from the period of the revolution has been very great. During my whole residence in the United States, I conversed with no enlightened American, who did not confess, that the constitution now, though the same in letter with that established in 1789, is essentially different in spirit. It was undoubtedly the wish of Washington and Hamilton to counterpoise, as much as circumstances would permit, the rashness of democracy by the caution and wisdom of 293 an aristocracy of intelligence and wealth. There is now no attempt at counterpoise. The weight is all in one scale, and the consequences are already apparent even to ordinary observation. The figure pointed at by the finger of the political dial is so strongly marked, that he who runs may read. I shall state a few circumstances which may illustrate the progress and tendency of opinion among the people of New York.

In that city a separation is rapidly taking place between the different orders of society. The operative class have already formed themselves into a society, under the name of “ *The Workies* ,” in direct opposition to those who, more favoured by nature or fortune, enjoy

the luxuries of life without the necessity of manual labour. These people make no secret of their demands, which, to do them justice, are few and emphatic. They are published in the newspapers, and may be read on half the walls of New York. Their first postulate is “EQUAL AND UNIVERSAL EDUCATION.” It is false, they say, to maintain that there is at present no privileged order, no practical aristocracy, in a country where distinctions 294 of education are permitted. That portion of the population whom the necessity of manual labour cuts off from the opportunity of enlarged acquirement, is in fact excluded from all the valuable offices of the Commonwealth. As matters are now ordered in the United States, these are distributed exclusively among one small class of the community, while those who constitute the real strength of the country, have barely a voice in the distribution of those loaves and fishes, which they are not permitted to enjoy. There does exist then —they argue—an aristocracy of the most odious kind,—an aristocracy of knowledge, education, and refinement, which is inconsistent with the true democratic principle of absolute equality. They pledge themselves, therefore, to exert every effort, mental and physical, for the abolition of this flagrant injustice. They proclaim it to the world as a nuisance which must be abated, before the freedom of an American be something more than a mere empty boast. They solemnly declare that they will not rest satisfied, till every citizen in the United States shall receive the same degree of education, and start fair in the competition for the honours and 295 the offices of the state. As it is of course impossible —and these men know it to be so—to educate the labouring class to the standard of the richer, it is their professed object to reduce the latter to the same mental condition with the former; to prohibit all supererogatory knowledge; to have a maximum of acquirement beyond which it shall be punishable to go.

But those who limit their views to the mental degradation of their country, are in fact the MODERATES of the party. There are others who go still further, and boldly advocate the introduction of an Agrarian law , and a periodical division of property. These unquestionably constitute the *extrême gauche* of the Worky Parliament, but still they only follow out the principles of their less violent neighbours, and eloquently dilate on the justice

and propriety of every individual being equally supplied with food and clothing; on the monstrous iniquity of one man riding in his carriage while another walks on foot, and after his drive indulging in a bottle of Champagne, while many of his neighbours are shamefully compelled to be content with the pure element. Only equalize 296 property, they say, and neither would drink Champagne or water, but both would have brandy, a consummation worthy of centuries of struggle to attain.

All this is nonsense undoubtedly, nor do I say that this party, though strong in New York, is yet so numerous or so widely diffused as to create immediate alarm. In the elections, however, for the civic offices of the city, their influence is strongly felt; and there can be no doubt that as population becomes more dense, and the supply of labour shall equal, or exceed the demand for it, the strength of this party must be enormously augmented. Their ranks will always be recruited by the needy, the idle, and the profligate, and like a rolling snowball it will gather strength and volume, until at length it comes down thundering with the force and desolation of an avalanche.

This event may be distant, but it is not the less certain on that account. It is nothing to say, that the immense extent of fertile territory yet to be occupied by an unborn population will delay the day of ruin. It will delay, but it cannot prevent it. The traveller, at the source of the Mississippi, in the very heart of the American Continent, may predict 297 with perfect certainty, that however protracted the wanderings of the rivulet at his foot, it must reach the ocean at last. In proportion as the nearer lands are occupied, it is very evident that the region to which emigration will be directed must of necessity be more distant. The pressure of population therefore will continue to augment in the Atlantic States, and the motives to removal become gradually weaker. Indeed, at the present rate of extension, the circle of occupied territory must before many generations be so enormously enlarged, that emigration will be confined wholly to the Western States. Then, and not till then, will come the trial of the American constitution; and until that trial has been passed, it is mere nonsense to appeal to its stability.

Nor is this period of trial apparently very distant. At the present ratio of increase, the population of the United States doubles itself in about twenty-four years, so that in half a century it will amount to about fifty millions, of which, at least, ten millions will be slaves, or at all events a degraded caste, cut off from all the rights and privileges of citizenship. Before this period it is very certain that the pressure 298 of the population, on the means of subsistence, especially in the Atlantic States, will be very great. The price of labour will have fallen, while that of the necessaries of life must be prodigiously enhanced. The poorer and more suffering class, will want the means of emigrating to a distant region of unoccupied territory. Poverty and misery will be abroad; the great majority of the people will be without property of any kind, except the thews and sinews with which God has endowed them; they will choose legislators under the immediate pressure of privation; and if in such circumstances, any man can anticipate security of property his conclusion must be founded, I suspect, rather on the wishes of a sanguine temperament, than on any rational calculation of probabilities.

It is the present policy of the government to encourage and stimulate the premature growth of a manufacturing population. In this it will not be successful, but no man can contemplate the vast internal resources of the United States—the varied productions of their soil—the unparalleled extent of river communication—the inexhaustible stores of coal and iron which are spread even on the surface—and 299 doubt that the Americans are destined to become a great manufacturing nation. Whenever increase of population shall have reduced the price of labour to a par with that in other countries, these advantages will come into full play; the United States will then meet England on fair terms in every market of the world, and in many branches of industry at least, will very probably attain an unquestioned superiority. Huge manufacturing cities will spring up in various quarters of the Union; the population will congregate in masses, and all the vices incident to such a condition of society will attain speedy maturity. Millions of men will depend for subsistence on the demand for a particular manufacture, and yet this demand will of necessity be liable to perpetual fluctuation. When the pendulum vibrates in one direction, there will be

an influx of wealth and prosperity; when it vibrates in the other, misery, discontent, and turbulence will spread through the land. A change of fashion—a war—the glut of a foreign market—a thousand unforeseen and inevitable accidents are liable to produce this, and deprive multitudes of bread, who but a month before were enjoying all the comforts of life. 300 Let it be remembered that in this suffering class will be practically deposited the whole political power of the state; that there can be no military force to maintain civil order, and protect property; and to what quarter, I should be glad to know, is the rich man to look for security, either of person or fortune?

There will be no occasion, however, for convulsion or violence. The *Worky* convention will only have to choose representatives of their own principles, in order to accomplish a general system of spoliation, in the most legal and constitutional manner. It is not even necessary that a majority of the federal legislature should concur in this. It is competent to the government of each state to dispose of the property within their own limits as they think proper, and whenever a *numerical* majority of the people shall be in favour of an Agrarian law, there exists no counteracting influence to prevent, or even to retard its adoption.

I have had the advantage of conversing with many of the most eminent Americans of the Union on the future prospects of their country, and I certainly remember none who did not admit that a period of 301 trial, such as that I have ventured to describe, is according to all human calculation inevitable. Many of them reckoned much on education as a means of safety; and unquestionably in a country where the mere power of breathing carries with it the right of suffrage, the diffusion of sound knowledge is always essential to the public security. It unfortunately happens, however, that in proportion as poverty increases, not only the means, but the desire of instruction are necessarily diminished. The man whose whole energies are required for the supply of his bodily wants, has neither time nor inclination to concern himself about his mental deficiencies, and the result of human experience does not warrant us in reckoning on the restraint of individual cupidity, where no obstacle exists to its gratification, by any deliberate calculation of its consequences on society. There can be no doubt, that if men could be made wise enough to act on an

enlarged and enlightened view of their own interest, government might be dispensed with altogether; but what statesman would legislate on the probability of such a condition of society, or rely on it as a means of future safety?

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The general answer, however, is, that the state of things which I have ventured to describe, is very distant. “It is enough,” they say, “ for each generation to look to itself, and we leave it to our descendants some centuries hence to take care of their interests as we do of ours. We enjoy all manner of freedom and security under our present constitution, and really feel very little concern about the evils which may afflict our posterity.” I cannot help believing, however, that the period of trial is somewhat less distant than such reasoners comfort themselves by imagining; but if the question be conceded that democracy necessarily leads to anarchy and spoliation, it does not seem that the mere length of road to be travelled is a point of much importance. This, of course, would vary according to the peculiar circumstances of every country in which the experiment might be tried. In England the journey would be performed with railway velocity. In the United States, with the great advantages they possess, it may continue a generation or two longer, but the termination is the same. The doubt regards time, not destination.

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At present the United States are perhaps more safe from revolutionary contention than any other country in the world. But this safety consists in one circumstance alone. *The great majority of the people are possessed of property;* have what is called a stake in the hedge; and are therefore, by interest, opposed to all measures which may tend to its insecurity. It is for such a condition of society that the present constitution was framed; and could this great bulwark of prudent government, be rendered as permanent as it is effective, there could be no assignable limit to the prosperity of a people so favoured. But the truth is undeniable, that as population increases, another state of things must necessarily arise, and one unfortunately never dreamt of in the philosophy of American legislators. The majority of the people will then consist of men without property of any kind, subject to the

immediate pressure of want, and then will be decided the great struggle between property and numbers; on the one side hunger, rapacity, and physical power; reason, justice, and helplessness on the other. The weapons of this fearful contest are already forged; the hands will soon be born that 304 are to wield them. At all events, let no man appeal to the stability of the American government as being established by experience, till this trial has been overpast. Forty years are no time to test the permanence, or, if I may so speak, the vitality of a constitution, the immediate advantages of which are strongly felt, and the evils latent and comparatively remote.

It may be well to explain, that what I have hitherto said has rather been directed to the pervading democracy of the institutions of the different States than to the federal government. Of the latter it is difficult to speak, because it is difficult to ascertain with any precision, the principles on which it is founded. I think it was a saying of Lord Eldon, that there was no act of Parliament so carefully worded that he could not drive a coach and six through it. The American lawyers have been at least equally successful with regard to their federal constitution. No man appears precisely to understand what it is, but all agree that it is something very wise. It is a sort of political gospel, in which every man finds a reflection of his own prejudices and opinions. Ask a New 5 305 England statesman what is the constitution, and he will tell you something very different from a Georgian or South Carolinian. Even the halls of Congress yet echo with loud and bitter disputation as to the primary and fundamental principle on which it is based. Ask the President of the United States, what is the nature of the government he administers with so much honour to himself and advantage to his country, and General Jackson will tell you that it is a government of *consolidation* , possessing full power to enforce its decrees in every district of the Union. Ask the Vice-president, and he will assure you that the government is merely *confederative* , and depends for its authority on the free consent of the individual States. Ask Mr Clay or Mr Webster what are the powers of this apparently unintelligible constitution, and they will probably include in their number the privilege of taxing at discretion the commerce of the country, and expending the money so raised in projects of

internal improvement. Put the same question to General Hayne or Mr Van Buren, and they will assert that such doctrine is of the most injurious tendency, and proceeds altogether on a false interpretation; VOL. I. 2 c 306 and yet all will agree that the federal constitution is the highest, most perspicuous, and faultless achievement of human legislation! It may be so, but till this masterpiece of polity becomes Something more definite and intelligible, a foreigner may perhaps be excused for holding his admiration in abeyance.

At all events, it is abundantly clear, that the seeds of discord are plentifully scattered throughout the Union. Men of different habits, different interests, different modes of thought; the inhabitants of different climates, and agreeing only in mutual antipathy, are united under a common government, whose powers are so indefinite as to afford matter for interminable and rancorous disputation. Does such a government bear the impress of permanence? Or does it not rather seem, in its very structure, to concentrate all the scattered elements of decay?

When we contemplate the political relations of this singular people, the question naturally arises whether unity of government be compatible with great diversities of interest in the governed. There may possibly be reasoners who are prepared to answer this 307 question in the affirmative, and to these we may look for instruction as to the advantages such a government as that of the United States possesses over others of smaller extent, and therefore capable of closer adaptation to the peculiar wants and interests of a people. To me it certainly appears that there can be no firm adhesion without homogeneity in a population. Let men once feel that their interests are the same; that they are exposed to the same dangers; solicitous for the same objects, partaking of the same advantages, and connected by some reasonable degree of geographical propinquity, and in such a community there is no fear of separation or dismemberment. The population in such circumstances forms one uniform and firmly-concatenated whole, whereas a Union on other principles resembles that of a bag of sand, in which the separate particles, though held together for a time, retain their original and abstract individuality.

Let us look for a moment at this Union. In Florida and Louisiana they grow sugar; in Maine there is scarcely sun enough to ripen a crop of maize. The people of these States are no less different than the productions of their soil. They are animated by 308 no sentiment of brotherhood and affinity. Nature has divided them by a distance of two thousand miles; the interests of one are neither understood nor cared for in the other. In short, they are connected by nothing but a clumsy and awkward piece of machinery most felicitously contrived to deprive both of the blessing of self-government. What is gained by this? A certain degree of strength, undoubtedly, but not more than might be produced by an alliance between independent States, unaccompanied by that jealousy and conflict of opposing interests, which is the present curse of the whole Union.

I remember, when at Washington, stating my impressions on this subject to a distinguished member of the House of Representatives, who admitted that the ends of good government would most probably be better and more easily attainable were the Union divided into several republics, firmly united for purposes of defence, but enjoying complete legislative independence. “And yet,” he continued, “the scheme could not possibly succeed. *The truth is, the Union is necessary to prevent us from cutting each other's throats.* ” Nor is this to be considered as the singular 309 opinion of some eccentric individual. I have often conversed on the subject with men of great intelligence in different parts of the Union, and found a perfect harmony of opinion as to the results of separation. The northern gentlemen, in particular, seemed to regard the federal government as the ark of their safety from civil war and bloodshed. In such circumstances it might charitably be wished, that their ark was a stronger sea-boat, and better calculated to weather the storms to which it is likely to be exposed.

In truth, every year must increase the perils of this federal constitution. Like other bubbles, it is at any time liable to burst, and the world will then discover that its external glitter covered nothing but wind. It may split to-morrow on the Tariff question, or it may go on, till, like a dropsical patient, it dies of mere extension, when its remains will probably be denied

even the decent honours of Christian burial. It was near giving up the ghost at the time of the Hartford convention, and is now in a state of grievous suffering from the Carolina fever. It will probably survive this attack as it did the former, since the great majority of the States are at present in favour of its continuance. 310 But, with the prevalence of the doctrine of nullification, it is impossible it can ever gain much strength or vigour. If each State is to have the privilege of sitting in judgment on the legality of its measures, the range of its legislation must necessarily be very confined. It will puzzle the ingenuity of American statesmen, to discover some policy which would prove palatable to the various members of the Union, and which all interpreters of the constitution would confess to be within the narrow limits of its power.

Let us suppose in England that each county asserted the privilege of nullifying, when it thought proper, the acts of the British Parliament. Leicestershire would summon her population in convention to resist any reduction of the foreign wool-duty. Kent and Surry would nullify the hop-duty. Lay a rude finger on kelp, and a distant threat of separation would be heard from the Orkneys. Dorset and Wilts would insist on the continuance of the corn-laws, and woe to the Chancellor of the Exchequer who should venture to raise the Highland war-slogan by an impost on horned cattle! Yet in Great Britain there exist 311 no provincial jealousies, and the interests of the whole kingdom are far more intimately amalgamated than can ever be the case in the United States.

Amid the multitude of events which threaten the dissolution of the Union, I may venture to specify one. The influence of each State in the election of the President is in the exact ratio of the amount of its population. In this respect the increase in some States is far greater than in others. The unrivalled advantages of New York have already given it the lead, and the same causes must necessarily still continue to augment its comparative superiority. Ohio—a State also rich in natural advantages—has recently been advancing with astonishing rapidity, and the time is apparently not far distant when three States (New York, Pennsylvania, and Ohio) must possess a numerical majority of the whole population, and of course the power of electing the President, independently of the other twenty-one

States. Will the States thus virtually excluded, tamely submit to this, or will they appeal to Congress for an amendment of the constitution? There can be no prospect of redress from this quarter. The same superiority of population 312 which gave those three States the power of electing the President, has of course also given them the majority of the House of Representatives, and no amendment of the constitution can take place without the concurrence of two-thirds of both houses. Besides, the principle of election by numerical majority is fundamental throughout the Union, and could not be abrogated without a total violation of consistency. It does appear, therefore, that in no great distance of time the whole substantial influence of the federal government may be wielded by three States, and that whenever these choose to combine, it will be in their power to carry any measure, however obnoxious to the rest of the Union. The Senate, it is true, which consists of delegates in equal number from each State, would be free from this influence, but in any struggle with the more popular house, it must of course prove the weaker party, and be compelled to yield.

Those know little of the character of the American people, who imagine that the great majority of the States would tolerate being reduced to the condition of political ciphers. Their jealousy of each other is 313 very great, and there can be no doubt, that should the contingency here contemplated occur, it must occasion a total disruption of the bonds of union; I believe it is the probability of such an event, joined to the apprehension of some interference with the condition of the slave population, which makes the people of the Southern States so anxious to narrow the power of the general government. At all events, it will be singular indeed if the seeds of civil broil, disseminated in a soil so admirably fitted to bring them to maturity, should not eventually yield an abundant harvest of animosity and dissension.*

* The opinions I have ventured to express on this subject are by no means singular. They are those of a large portion of the American people. Chancellor Kent—the ablest constitutional lawyer of his country—says, in his Commentaries, “ *If ever the tranquillity of this nation is to be disturbed, and its peace jeopardised by a struggle for power among*

themselves, it will be upon this very subject of the choice of a President. It is the question that is eventually to attest the goodness and try the strength of the constitution." And many other authorities might be adduced, were the subject one on which *mere* authority could have much weight.

After much—I hope impartial and certainly patient—observation, it does appear to me, that universal suffrage is the rock on which American freedom is VOL. I. 2 D 314 most likely to suffer shipwreck. The intrinsic evils of the system are very great, and its adoption in the United States was the more monstrous, because a qualification in property is there not only a test of intelligence, but of moral character. The man must either be idle or profligate, or more probably both, who does not, in a country where labour is so highly rewarded, obtain a qualification of some sort. He is evidently unworthy of the right of suffrage, and by every wise legislature would be debarred from its exercise. In densely peopled countries the test of property in reference to moral qualities is fallible,—perhaps too fallible to be relied on with much confidence. In the United States it is *unerring* , or at least the possible exceptions are so few, and must arise from circumstances so peculiar, that it is altogether unnecessary they should find any place in the calculations of a statesman. But American legislators have thought proper to cast away this inestimable advantage. Seeing no immediate danger in the utmost extent of suffrage, they were content to remain blind to the future. They took every precaution that the rights of the poor man should not be encroached 315 on by the rich, but never seem to have contemplated the possibility that the rights of the latter might be violated by the former. American protection, like Irish reciprocity, was all on one side. It was withheld where most needed; it was profusely lavished where there was no risk of danger. They put a sword in the hand of one combatant, and took the shield from the arm of the other.

The leader who gave the first and most powerful impulse to the democratic tendencies of the constitution was unquestionably Jefferson. His countrymen call him great, but in truth he was great only when compared with those by whom he was surrounded. In brilliance and activity of intellect he was inferior to Hamilton; but Hamilton in heart and mind was

an aristocrat, and too honourable and too proud to shape his political course to catch the flitting gales of popular favour. Death, fortunately for Jefferson, removed the only rival, by whom his reputation could have been eclipsed, or his political principles successfully opposed. Adams he encountered and overthrew. Federalism, never calculated to secure popular favour, dwindled on, till in the termination of the late war it 316 received its death-blow, and the democratic party remained undisputed lords of the ascendant.

We seek in vain in the writings of Jefferson for indications of original or profound thought. When in France, he had been captivated by that shallow philosophy of which Diderot and Condorcet were the apostles, and he returned to America, the zealous partisan of opinions, which no subsequent experience could induce him to relinquish or modify. During by far the greater portion of his life, the intellect of Jefferson remained stationary. Time passed on; generations were gathered to their fathers; the dawn of liberty on the continent of Europe had terminated in a bloody sunset; but the shadow on the dial of his mind remained unmoved. In his correspondence we find him to the very last, complacently putting forth the stale and flimsy dogmas, which, when backed by the guillotine, had passed for unanswerable in the Jacobin coteries of the Revolution.

The mind of Jefferson was essentially unpoetical. In his whole works there is no trace discoverable of imaginative power. His benevolence was rather topical than expansive. It reached France, but never 317 ventured across the channel, Had Napoleon invaded England, the heart and prayers of Jefferson would have followed him in the enterprise. He would have gloated over her fallen palaces, her conflagrated cities, her desolate fields. Her blood, her sufferings, her tears, the glorious memory of her past achievements' would in him have excited no feeling of compassionate regret. Jefferson had little enthusiasm of character. Nor was he rich in those warm charities and affections, in which great minds are rarely deficient. He has been truly called a good hater. His resentments were not vehement and fiery ebullitions, burning fiercely for a time, and then subsiding into indifference or dislike. They were cool, fiendlike, and ferocious; unsparing, undying, unappeasable. The enmities of most men terminate with the death of their object. It

was the delight of Jefferson to trample even on the graves of his political opponents. The manner in which he speaks of Hamilton in his correspondence, and the charges by which he vainly attempts to blast his reputation, will attach an indelible tarnish to his own memory. He never forgave the superior confidence which Washington reposed in the wisdom and 318 integrity of Hamilton. The only amiable feature in the whole life of Jefferson was his reconciliation with Adams, and there the efficient link was community of hatred. Both detested Hamilton.

The moral character of Jefferson was repulsive. Continually puling about liberty, equality, and the degrading curse of slavery, he brought his own children to the hammer, and made money of his debaucheries. Even at his death, he did not manumit his numerous offspring, but left them, soul and body, to degradation, and the cart-whip. A daughter of Jefferson was sold some years ago, by public auction, at New Orleans, and purchased by a society of gentlemen, who wished to testify, by her liberation, their admiration of the statesman,

“Who dreamt of freedom in a slave's embrace.”

This single line gives more insight to the character of the man, than whole volumes of panegyric. It will outlive his epitaph, write it who may.

Jefferson was succeeded by Madison, a mere reflex of his political opinions. If he wanted the harsher points of Jefferson's character, he wanted also its 319 vigour. The system he pursued was indistinguishable from that of his predecessor, and during his Presidency the current of democracy flowed on with increased violence and velocity. Munroe came next, and becoming at length aware of the prevailing tendencies of the constitution, was anxious to steer a middle course. He organized a piebald cabinet, composed of men of different opinions, and the result of their conjunction was a sort of hybrid policy, half federalist and half democratic, which gave satisfaction to no party.

At the termination of Mr Munroe's second period of office, Mr John Quincy Adams became his successor, by a sort of electioneering juggle which occasioned a universal sentiment

of disgust. What the principles of this statesman were, or are, seems a matter not very intelligible to his own countrymen, and of course is still less so to a foreigner. All that is necessary to be known is, that at the expiration of four years Mr Quincy Adams was turned out, to the great satisfaction of the whole Union, and that though he still continues in the healthy enjoyment of all corporeal and mental functions, there is assuredly no 320 chance that he will ever again be promoted to any office of political trust and importance.

General Jackson, the present President, has always been an eminent member of the democratic party. His accession to office, however, united to the experience of a long life, is understood to have induced a change in some of his opinions, and a modification of others. His policy is as moderate as the circumstances of the times will permit. On the Tariff question his opinions are not precisely known, but he decidedly opposes the application of the public money, under direction of the federal government, to projects of internal improvement.

General Jackson was certainly indebted for his present elevation, to the reputation he acquired in the successful defence of New Orleans. In truth, I believe his popularity is rather military than political, since even those—and they are many—who dislike him as a politician, extol him as the first general of the age, whose reputation beggars the fame of the most celebrated modern strategists.

It is excusable to smile at this, but scarcely fair to visit it with severity of ridicule. New Orleans,— 321 for want of a better,—is the American Waterloo; and while the loss to England occasioned by this disaster is a fixed quantity, neither to be increased nor diminished, why should we object to the display of a little harmless vanity, or demand that our successful opponents should measure the extent of their achievement rather by our standard than by their own?

When talking of American statesmen, I may as well detail a few circumstances connected with one, who has certainly played a very conspicuous part in the politics of his country.

I allude to the celebrated Colonel Burr, formerly Vice-President of the United States, and who, in 1800, was within a vote of becoming President in opposition to Jefferson and Adams. It is well known, that strong political differences with General Hamilton, embittered by a good deal of personal dislike, led to a duel, in which Hamilton lost his life. To this misfortune is attributable the entire ruin of Colonel Burr's prospects as a statesman. Hamilton was admired by all parties, and the voice of lamentation was heard from the whole Union on the premature extinction of the 322 highest intellect of the country. There arose a general and powerful feeling of indignation against the author of this national calamity; but Burr was not a man to shrink from the pelting of any tempest, however vehement. He braved its violence, but at once knew that his popularity was gone for ever.

Subsequently he was concerned in some conspiracy to seize on part of Mexico, of which he was to become sovereign, by the style and title—Isuppose—of Aaron the First, King or Emperor of the Texas. Colonel Burr was likewise accused of treason to the commonwealth, in attempting to overthrow the constitution by force of arms. But a veil of mystery hangs around this portion of American history. I have certainly read a great deal about it, and left off nearly as wise as when I began. A conspiracy of some sort did undoubtedly exist. Preparations were in progress to collect an armament on the Ohio, and there was some rumour of its descending the Mississippi and seizing on New Orleans. Some of Burr's followers were tried, but—unless my memory deceives me—acquitted. At all events, materials could not be discovered for the conviction of the Great Catiline, whose projects, 323 whether defensible or not, were original, and indicative of the fearless character of the man.

His acquittal, however, by two juries, was not sufficient to establish his innocence in the opinion of his countrymen. He was assailed by hatred and execration; his name was made a by-word for every thing that was odious in morals, and unprincipled in politics. It was under such circumstances that Burr became an exile from his country for several years. During that period he visited England, where he attracted the jealous observation of the ministry, and his correspondence with France being more frequent than was quite

agreeable, and of a cast somewhat too political, he received a polite invitation to quit the country with the least possible delay. Colonel Burr now lives in New York, secluded from society, where his great talents and extensive professional knowledge, still gain him some employment as a consulting lawyer.

A friend of mine in New York enquired whether I should wish for an interview with this distinguished person. I immediately answered in the affirmative, and a note was addressed to Colonel Burr, requesting permission to introduce me. The answer contained 324 a polite assent, and indicated an hour when his avocations would permit his having sufficient leisure for the enjoyment of conversation. At the time appointed, my friend conveyed me to a house in one of the poorer streets of the city. The Colonel received us on the landing place, with the manners of a finished courtier, and led the way to his little library, which —judging from the appearance of the volumes—was principally furnished with works connected with the law.

In person, Colonel Burr is diminutive, and I was much struck with the resemblance he bears to the late Mr Perceval. His physiognomy is expressive of strong sagacity. The eye keen, penetrating, and deeply set; the forehead broad and prominent; the mouth small, but disfigured by the ungraceful form of the lips; and the other features, though certainly not coarse, are irreconcilable with any theory of beauty. On the whole, I have rarely seen a more remarkable countenance. Its expression is highly intellectual, but I imagined I could detect the lines of strong passion mingled with those of deep thought. The manners of Colonel Burr are those of a highly 325 bred gentleman. His powers of conversation are very great, and the opinions he expresses on many subjects marked by much shrewdness and originality.

When in England he had become acquainted with many of the Whig leaders, and I found him perfectly versed in every thing connected with our national politics.

It would be an unwarrantable breach of the confidence of private life, were I to publish any particulars of the very remarkable conversation I enjoyed with this eminent person. I shall, therefore, merely state, that having encroached perhaps too long, both on the time and patience of Colonel Burr, I bade him farewell, with sincere regret that a career of public life, which had opened so brilliantly, should not have led to a more fortunate termination.

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CHAPTER X. PHILADELPHIA

On the 8th of January I again bade farewell to New York, and embarked on board of a New Brunswick steamer on my way to Philadelphia. Our course lay up the Raritan river, which has nothing interesting to display in point of scenery, and the morning being raw and gusty, the voyage was not particularly agreeable. It occupied about four hours, and on reaching Brunswick, we found a cavalcade of nine stage-coaches, drawn up for the accommodation of the passengers. In these we were destined to cross the country between the Raritan and Delaware, which forms part of the State of New Jersey. In theory nothing could be easier than this journey. The distance was only twenty-seven miles; and in a thorough-fare 327 so much travelled as that between the two great cities of the Union, it was at least not probable that travellers would be subjected to much inconvenience.

But theory and experience were at variance in this case, as in many others. We changed coaches at every stage, and twice had the whole baggage of the party to be unpacked and reloaded. The road was detestable; the jolting even worse than what I had suffered on my journey from Providence to Boston. For at least half the distance, the coach was axle-deep in mud, and once it fairly stuck in a rut, and might have continued sticking till doomsday, had the passengers not dismounted to lighten the vehicle. I enquired the reason of the disgraceful neglect of this important line of communication, and was answered, that as it was intended at some future period to have a railway, it would be mere folly to go to any

expense in repairing it. Thus are this intelligent people content to sacrifice a great present benefit, to a mere speculative, and probably remote contingency.

The scenery through which our route lay was devoid of beauty, and the soil wretchedly poor. The 328 whole country had evidently at one time been under cultivation, but in much of it the plough had long ceased from labour, and the forest had already resumed its ancient rights. The weather added to the bleakness of the landscape, and though the coach crept on with the velocity of a tortoise, it was not till long after dark that we reached Bristol. Here we took boat again, and our troubles were at an end. A plentiful dinner contributed to beguile the distance, and the city clocks were in the act of chiming ten as we landed on the quay of Philadelphia.

Having procured a coach, I drove to Head's hotel, which had been recommended to me as one of the best houses in the Union. Here I could only procure a small and nasty bedroom, lighted by a few panes of glass fixed in the wall, some eight or ten feet from the floor. On the following morning, therefore, I removed to the United States Hotel, where I found the accommodation excellent. My letters of introduction were then despatched, with the result which my experience of American kindness had led me to anticipate.

Philadelphia stands on an isthmus about two miles 329 wide, between the Delaware and the Schuylkill. Below the city, both rivers are navigable for vessels of any class, but the severity of the winter climate generally causes an interruption to the communication with the sea, of considerable duration. As a great seat of commerce the advantage is altogether on the side of New York. Philadelphia has but trifling extent of river communication with the interior. The Delaware is navigable only for about thirty miles above the city, and the Schuylkill is too full of shoals and rapids to be practicable for any thing but small craft. To remedy this inconvenience there are several canals, and others are in progress, which must contribute largely to the prosperity of the State.

There is nothing striking in the appearance of Philadelphia when seen from the river. It stands on a flat surface, and presents no single object of beauty or grandeur to arrest the attention. Spires may be monsters in architecture, but they are beautiful monsters, and the eye feels a sad want of them, as it wanders over the unvaried extent of dull uniform building presented by Philadelphia. When one enters the city the scene is certainly improved, but not much. VOL. I. 2 E 330 The streets are rather respectable than handsome, but there is everywhere so much appearance of real comfort, that the traveller is at first delighted with this Quaker paradise. He looks from the carriage windows prepared to see every thing *couleur de rose.* The vehicle rolls on; he praises the cleanness and neatness of the houses, and every street that presents itself seems an exact copy of those which he has left behind. In short, before he has got through half the city, he feels an unusual tendency to relaxation about the region of the mouth, which ultimately terminates in a silent but prolonged yawn.

Philadelphia is mediocrity personified in brick and mortar. It is a city laid down by a square and rule, sort of habitable problem,—a mathematical infringement on the rights of individual eccentricity,—a rigid and prosaic despotism of right angles and parallelograms. It may emphatically be called a *comfortable* city, that is, the houses average better than in any other with which I am acquainted. You here see no miserable and filthy streets, the refuge of squalid poverty, forming a contrast to the splendour of squares and crescents. No Dutch town can be 331 cleaner, and the marble stairs and window sills of the better houses, give an agreeable relief to the red brick of which they are constructed.

The public buildings are certainly superior to any I have yet seen in America. Some of the churches are handsome, and the United States Bank, with its marble portico of Grecian Doric, gives evidence, I trust, of an improving taste. I confess, however, that my hopes on this matter are not very sanguine. Even persons of information are evidently unable to appreciate the true merit of the building or the architect, and connect ridicule with both, by declaring the former to be “the finest building in the world!” Is a poor traveller in the United

States, when continually beset by such temptation, to be held utterly inexcusable, if he sometimes venture to indulge in a sneer?

The Bank of Pennsylvania is another structure entitled to applause. Its front presents a flight of steps sustaining an Ionic portico of six columns, with an entablature and pediment. The banking-house of Mr Girard,—the Coutts of the Union,—is likewise handsome. Like the two buildings I have already 5 332 mentioned its whole front is of marble, but in taste it is far less chaste, and presents more faults than I have time or inclination to enumerate. There are likewise two buildings of some pretension, in the Gothic style. Both are contemptible.

The State House, from which issued the declaration of American independence, is yet standing. It is built of brick, and consists of a centre and two wings, without ornament of any sort. There is something appropriate, and even imposing in its very plainness. Above is a small cupola with a clock, which at night is illuminated by gas.

The Philadelphians, however, pride themselves far more on their waterworks than on their State House. Their *Io Pœans* on account of the former, are loud and unceasing, and I must say, the annoyance which these occasion to a traveller, is very considerable. A dozen times a-day was I asked whether I had seen the waterworks, and on my answering in the negative, I was told that I positively must visit them; that they were unrivalled in the world; that no people but the Americans could have executed such works, and by implication, that no one but an Englishman, meanly 333 jealous of American superiority, would omit an opportunity of admiring their unrivalled mechanism.

There is no accounting for the eccentricities of human character. I had not heard these circumstances repeated above fifty times, ere I began to run restive, and determined not to visit the waterworks at all. To this resolution I adhered, in spite of all annoyance, with a pertinacity worthy of a better cause. Of the waterworks of Philadelphia, therefore, I know

nothing, and any reader, particularly solicitous to become acquainted with the principle of this remarkable piece of machinery, must consult the pages of other travellers.

I had the honour of being present at an annual celebration of the American Philosophical Society. About a hundred members sat down to a most excellent supper, and the wine and punch were equally unimpeachable. The President, Mr Du Ponceau, then made a speech, in which he gave a very interesting account of the rise and progress of the Society to its present flourishing condition. It was originally established by Franklin, and a few of his fellow-tradesmen, who met in some back-room of an obscure tavern, and having supped on bread and cheese, enjoyed the 334 feast of reason over a pot of London Particular. The Society now includes in its members all that America can boast of eminence in literature or science.

On the following evening, I passed an hour or two very agreeably at one of a series of meetings, which are called “Wistar Parties,” from the name of the gentleman at whose house they were first held. Their effect and influence on society must be very salutary. These parties bring together men of different classes and pursuits, and promote the free interchange of opinion, always useful for the correction of prejudice. Such intercourse, too, prevents the narrowness of thought, and exaggerated estimate of the value of our own peculiar acquirements, which devotion to one exclusive object is apt to engender in those who do not mix freely with the world.

These meetings are held by rotation at the houses of the different members. The conversation is generally literary or scientific, and as the party is usually very large, it can be varied at pleasure. Philosophers eat like other men, and the precaution of an excellent supper is by no means found to be superfluous. It acts too as a gentle emollient on the acrimony of 335 debate. No man can say a harsh thing with his mouth full of turkey, and disputants forget their differences in unity of enjoyment.

At these parties I met several ingenious men of a class something below that of the ordinary members. When an operative mechanic attracts notice by his zeal for improvement in any branch of science, he is almost uniformly invited to the Wistar meetings. The advantage of this policy is obviously very great. A modest and deserving man is brought into notice. His errors are corrected, his ardour is stimulated, his taste improved. A healthy connexion is kept up between the different classes of society, and the feeling of mutual sympathy is duly cherished. During my stay in Philadelphia I was present at several of these Wistar meetings, and always returned from them with increased conviction of their beneficial tendency.

Most of the great American cities have a peculiar character,—a sort of civic idiosyncracy, which distinguishes their population even to the eye of an unpractised observer. There is no mistaking that of Philadelphia; it is Quaker all over. All things, animate and inanimate, seem influenced by a spirit of 336 quietism as pervading as the atmosphere. The manners of the higher orders are somewhat more reserved than in other parts of the Union, and I must say that all ranks are particularly free from the besetting sin of curiosity. Fortunately for travellers, it is not here considered essential that they should disclose every circumstance connected with their past life and opinions.

Philadelphia is *par excellence* a city of mediocrity. Its character is republican not democratic. One can read the politics of its inhabitants in the very aspect of the streets. A coarse and vulgar demagogue would have no chance among a people so palpably observant of the proprieties, both moral and political. The Philadelphians are no traffickers in extremes of any sort, and were I to form my opinion of a government, from the impression made by its policy on some particular district of the Union, I should certainly take this enlightened and respectable city as the guide and standard of my creed.

The chief defect of Philadelphia is want of variety. It is just such a city as a young lady would cut out of a thread paper,—

Street answers street, each alley has a brother, And half the city just reflects the other.

Something is certainly wanted to relieve that unbroken uniformity, which tires the eye and stupifies the imagination. One would give the world for something to admire or to condemn, and would absolutely rejoice, for the mere sake of variety, to encounter a row of log huts, or get immersed in a congress of dark and picturesque *closes* , such as delight all travellers—without noses—in the old town of Edinburgh.

The Utilitarian principle is observed, even in the nomenclature of the streets. Those running in one direction are denoted by the name of some particular tree,—such as vine, cedar, chestnut, spruce, &c. The cross-streets are distinguished by numbers, so that a stranger has no difficulty in finding his way, since the name of the street indicates its situation. Market Street is the great thoroughfare of the city, and stretches from one river to the other, an extent of several miles. The streets are generally skirted by rows of Lombardy poplars, for what reason I know VOL. I 2 F 338 not. They certainly give no shade, and possess no beauty.

Notwithstanding the attractions of Philadelphia, it was not my intention to have remained there longer than a week, but while engaged in preparation for departure, a deep fall of snow came on, and the communications of the city were at once cut off. A week passed without intelligence from the northward, and even the southern mails were several days in arrear. The snow lay deep on the streets, and wheeled carriages were of necessity exchanged for sledges, or, as they are usually called, sleighs. Of course, it would have been absurd for a traveller, with no motive for expedition, to commence a journey under such circumstances, and I determined to prolong my stay until the roads should be reported in such condition as to threaten no risk of detention in my route to Baltimore.

During this interval I visited the Penitentiary. It stands about two miles from the city, but owing to the depth of snow, the sleigh could not approach within a considerable distance

of the building, and the pedestrian part of the excursion presented much 339 difficulty. A thin icy crust had formed over the surface of the snow, which often gave way beneath the foot, and more than once I was immersed to the shoulders.

I did, however, reach the Penitentiary at last. It is a square granite building of great extent, with a tower at each angle, and the walls enclose a space of ten acres. In the centre of the area stands an observatory, from which it is intended that seven corridors shall radiate, but three only have been yet completed. The cells are arranged on either side of these corridors, with which they communicate by a square aperture, which may be opened at pleasure from without. There is likewise a small eye-hole, commanding a complete view of the cell, and attached to each is a walled court, in which the prisoner may take exercise. The only entrance to the cells lies through these court-yards.

The system pursued in this institution is entirely different from that which, in a former part of this volume, I have had occasion to describe. No punishment is permitted within its walls but that of solitary confinement. Nothing is left to the discretion of the 340 gaoler, or his assistants, and all risk of abuse is thus obviated. I cannot but consider this as an inestimable advantage. If discretionary power be confessedly dangerous when exercised by a judge in open court, under the strong check of public opinion, what are we to say of it when confided to a gaoler, and exercised without responsibility of any sort, amid the secrecy of his prison-house?

The warder of the establishment struck me as a person of much enthusiasm and benevolence. He evidently took pleasure in affording every information in regard to the practical operation of the system, though its introduction is too recent to afford room for any conclusive appeal to experience. The punishment originally contemplated in this prison was solitary confinement, unmitigated by labour. All experience is against the practicability of combining this system with the continuance of bodily health and mental sanity in the prisoners. It was therefore wisely given up, and of that adopted in its stead I shall now offer a few details.

A convict, on arriving at the prison, is blindfolded, and conveyed to a room, where his hair is cut, and 341 after a complete personal ablution, he is led with the same precaution, to the cell destined for his reception. He is thus kept in ignorance of the localities of the prison, and the chances of escape are diminished. Each cell is provided with an iron bedstead, a comfortable mattrass, two blankets, and a pillow. There is likewise a water-cock and tin mug, so that the prisoner may supply himself *ad libitum* with the pure element. The cells are heated by pipes, and though I visited the prison in the very coldest weather, the temperature was very pleasant.

When a prisoner is first received, he is uniformly left to enjoy the full privilege of solitary idleness; but in the course of a short time he generally makes application for work, and for a Bible. Each man is permitted to select his own trade, and those who understand none when they enter the prison are taught one. The allowance of food is good and plentiful, but those who refuse to work, are kept on a reduced allowance. Their number, however, is exceedingly small, and the great majority consider even the temporary withdrawal of work as a severe punishment.

Having taken up rather strong opinions with regard 342 to the injurious influence of solitary confinement, I was rather anxious to have an opportunity of conversing with a few of the prisoners. To this no objection was made, and I was accordingly ushered into the cell of a black shoemaker, convicted of theft, whom I found very comfortably seated at his trade. I asked him many questions, which he answered with great cheerfulness. He had been confined—I think—for eighteen months, yet this long period of separation from his fellow-creatures had occasioned no derangement of his functions, bodily or mental. I likewise conversed with two other prisoners, and the result of my observations certainly was the conviction, that solitary confinement, when associated with labour, is by no means liable to the objections which I have often heard urged to its adoption as a punishment. I have likewise the assurance of the warder, that during his whole experience, he has not known

a single instance of the discipline adopted being found prejudicial to health, either of mind or body.

There is undoubtedly much that is admirable in this Penitentiary, but I am not sure that either the plan or the practice of the establishment is so perfect 343 as to admit of no improvement. In the first place, I cannot but think that the Panopticon principle is on the whole preferable. Facility of supervision is always important, and there is no point in the present prison from which the keeper can command a general and complete view, either of the cells or of the exercise-yards. The central observatory commands only the corridors. In the second place, it strikes me as a defect that there should be no entrance to the cells from the corridors, by which a far more ready and convenient access would be obtained. There is also a defect in the construction of the exercise-courts, in which it is quite possible for the adjoining prisoners to hold conversation.

There is no chapel attached to this establishment, and when divine service is performed, the clergyman takes his station at the head of the corridors; the apertures communicating with the cells are thrown open, and his voice, I am assured, is distinctly audible, even by the most distant prisoner. Strange to say, however—and I confess that in a state so religious as Pennsylvania, the fact struck me with astonishment—morning and evening prayers are unknown 344 in the Penitentiary. Surely, it is both wholesome and fitting that the days of these suffering criminals should be begun and ended by an appeal to the mercy of that Maker, whose laws they have offended. It is true, that divine service is performed once every Sunday, but this will scarcely be held sufficient, either by the moralist, who simply regards the interest of society in the reformation of a criminal, or by him whose philanthropy is connected with the higher hopes and motives of religion.

On the whole, I am inclined to prefer the system of solitary confinement to that adopted in the prisons at Auburn and Charleston. The former obviates all necessity for punishment of any kind, beyond that inflicted by the execution of the sentence. Whatever be his sufferings, the prisoner has the distinct knowledge that they are not arbitrary or

extrajudicial. Even amidst the solitude of his cell, he feels that he is in, one sense a *free man.* He undergoes the sentence of the law, but he is not dependent on the capricious discretion of those by whom he is surrounded. In Charleston each prisoner knows himself to be a slave. His punishment is in truth unlimited, for its 345 only measure is the conscience of his gaoler, an unknown and indeterminate quantity.

There is nothing humiliating in solitary confinement. The interests of society are protected by the removal of the criminal, while the new circumstances in which he is placed are precisely the most favourable to moral improvement. It is the numerous temptations of the world, the scope which it affords for the gratification of strong passion, that overpower the better principles implanted in the heart of the most depraved of mankind. Remove these temptations,—place the criminal in a situation where there are no warring influences to mislead his judgment;—let him receive religious instruction, and be taught the nature and extent of his moral obligations, and when, after such preparation, he is left to reflection, and communion with his own conscience, all that human agency can effect, has probably been done for his reformation.

Solitary confinement contributes to all this. It throws the mind of the criminal back upon itself. It forces him to think who never thought before. It removes all objects which can stimulate the evil passions of his nature. It restores the prisoner to 346 society, if not “a wiser and a better man,” at least undegraded by a course of servile submission. His punishment has been that of a man, not of a brute. He has suffered privation, but not indignity. He has submitted to the law, and to the law alone, and whatever debasement may still attach to his character, is the offspring of his crime, not of its penalty.

The other system is far less favourable I should imagine to moral improvement. The gaoler must necessarily appear to the prisoners in the light of an arbitrary tyrant. He is an object of fear and hatred. His inflictions are accompanied by none of the solemnities of justice, and they are naturally followed by smothered rancour and desire of revenge. Even where there is no abuse of authority, it is impossible for those subjected to it, to appreciate the

motives for its rigid exercise. They cannot be supposed to discriminate between severity and cruelty.

All this is unfortunate. The character of the prisoners is rendered callous to shame, while their evil passions are in a state of permanent excitement. They are taught obedience like spaniels, and by the same means. They are forced down to the very lowest 347 point of human debasement. Never again shall these men know the dignity of self-respect; never again can they feel themselves on a level with their fellowmen. Human endurance can extend no further than they have carried it, and it were well that American legislators should remember, that it is easy to degrade the freeman, but impossible to elevate the slave.

One great advantage belongs to the Philadelphia system. A prisoner on being discharged enters the world without danger of recognition, and thus enjoys the benefit of starting with a fair character. If his confinement has been long, disease and the gibbet have probably disposed of the great majority of his former companions in crime, and in a country like the United States, nothing but honest industry is wanting to the attainment of independence. But a convict discharged from a prison like those of Charleston and Auburn, must continue through life a marked man. His face is known to thousands, and go where he will—unless he fly altogether from the haunts of men—the story of his past life will follow him. Excluded from communion with the more respectable portion of the community, he will probably again seek 348 his associates among the dissolute. His former course of crime will then be renewed, and all hope of reformation will be at an end for ever.

It is impossible, however, to praise too highly that active benevolence which in America takes so deep an interest in the reformation of the objects of punishment. In their ameliorations of prison discipline, the people of this country have unquestionably taken the lead of Europe. In old established communities the progress of improvement is necessarily slow, and there are difficulties to be overcome which are fortunately unknown on this side of the Atlantic. Let the Americans, therefore, continue as they have begun, to lead the

way in this important department of practical philanthropy. By doing so, they will earn a distinction for their country more honourable than could result from the highest eminence in arts, or achievements in arms.

Of all the American colleges beyond the limits of New England, that of Pennsylvania is perhaps the most distinguished. Its medical school is decidedly so, and an Esculapian armed with a Philadelphia diploma, is held to commit slaughter on his fellow-creatures 349 according to the most approved principles of modern science. Till within a few years, however, the scientific and literary departments of this institution had fallen into comparative neglect. But a revolution in an American college is an easier affair than the introduction of the most trifling change in such establishments as those of Oxford or Cambridge. The statutes were revised by a board of trustees appointed for the purpose. The system of education was corrected and enlarged, and men of competent talent and acquirements were invited to preside over the various departments of instruction. A new edifice was erected, and an extensive addition made to the former beggarly account of philosophical apparatus. The natural consequences followed. The number of students was considerably increased, and the benefits of the institution were augmented not only in magnitude, but in extent of diffusion.

In this establishment there is no discretion permitted in regard to the course of study to be followed by the student. Every one is compelled to travel in the same track, and to reach the same point, whatever may be his future destination in life. It is perhaps 350 quite right that such portions of a university course should be considered imperative, as relate to the preparatory developement of the intellectual powers, but it does appear somewhat absurd to insist on cramming every boy with mathematics, chemistry, and natural philosophy. In America, the period devoted to education is so short, that there can be no folly greater than that of frittering it away in a variety of pursuits, which contribute little to the general elevation of the intellect. It is the certain result of attempting too much, that nothing will be accomplished. With such a system of education the standard of acquirement must of necessity be greatly lower than in other countries, where excellence in some one

department constitutes the great object of individual ambition. The truth of this position is in perfect accordance with the state of knowledge in America. In illustration of it, I shall direct the attention of the reader to an extract from the report of the Board of Trustees of this very University of Pennsylvania. Alluding to the prescribed course of education, these gentlemen assure the public, that “Its object is to communicate *a profound* and *critical knowledge* of the *classics;* an 351 *extensive acquaintance* with the *different branches of mathematical science, natural philosophy* , and *chemistry* , combined with *all the varieties of knowledge* comprehended within the sphere of *moral philosophy, logic, rhetoric, metaphysics* , and the *evidences of Christianity. This course of instruction will occupy* FOUR YEARS!”

Had the number of years to be devoted to the acquisition of this vast mass of knowledge been *forty* instead of *four* , the promise of the Board of Trustees might still have been objectionable on the score of hyperbole. In Europe no body of gentlemen connected with any public seminary would have dared to venture on such a statement. Respect for their own character, and the certainty of ridicule, would have prevented it. But in America it is different. The standard of knowledge being there infinitely lower, the Trustees promised nothing more than they might reasonably hope to accomplish. On the Western shores of the Atlantic, a young man is believed to have “a profound and critical knowledge of the classics,” when he can manage to construe a passage of Cæsar or Virgil, and—by the help of the lexicon 352 —haply of Xenophon or Anacreon. And so with the other branches of acquirement. In mathematics, it is scarcely meant to be implied that the student shall have mastered the works of La Grange or La Place; nor in metaphysics, that he shall even understand the philosophy of Kant or Cousin, but simply that he shall have acquired enough to constitute, in the eyes of the American public, “an extensive acquaintance with the different branches of mathematical science, combined with all the varieties of knowledge comprehended within the sphere of moral philosophy, logic, rhetoric, and metaphysics.”

It thus appears that what in one country would be nothing better than impudent quackery, becomes the language of sober truth in another. The same terms carry different meanings on different sides of the water, and the cause of the discrepancy is too obvious to be mistaken. Having alluded to this subject, I would willingly be permitted to offer a few observations on the interesting question,—How far the condition of society in the United States, and the influence of its institutions are favourable, or otherwise, to the cultivation of philosophy and the higher literature?

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The termination of the revolutionary war left the United States with a population graduating in civilisation from slaves to planters. The scale went low enough, but unfortunately not very high. The great mass of the white population, especially in the Northern States, were by no means deficient in such education as was suited to their circumstances. In a country to which abject poverty was happily a stranger, there existed few obstacles to the general diffusion of elementary instruction. But between the amount of acquirement of the richer and the poorer orders, little disparity existed. Where the necessity of labour was imposed on all, it was not probable that any demand should exist for learning not immediately connected with the business of life. To the grower of indigo or tobacco; to the feller of timber, or the retailer of cutlery and dry goods, the refinements of literature were necessarily unknown. In her whole population America did not number a single scholar, in the higher acceptation of the term, and had every book in her whole territory been contributed to form a national library, it would not have afforded the materials from which a scholar could be framed. VOL. I. 2 G

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It is true, that in several of the States there existed colleges, but these were little better than schools without the necessary discipline; and had their pretensions been greater, it is very certain that such poor and distant establishments could offer no inducement to foreigners of high acquirement to exchange “the ampler ether, the diviner air,” of their native universities, for the atmosphere of Yale or Harvard. At all events the Americans had

no desire to draw our men of letters from their learned retreats. In the condition of society I have described, it was impossible that learning should engross any portion of the public favour. Even to the present day, the value of education in the United States is estimated, not by its result on the mind of the student, in strengthening his faculties, purifying his taste, and enlarging and elevating the sphere of thought and consciousness, *but by the amount of available knowledge which it enables him to bring to the common business of life.*

The consequences of this error, when participated in by a whole nation, have been most pernicious. It has unquestionably contributed to perpetuate the very ignorance in which it originated. It has done its part, 355 in connexion with other causes, in depriving the United States of the most enduring source of national greatness. Nor can we hope that the evil will be removed, until the vulgar and unworthy sophistry which has imposed on the judgment, even of the most intelligent Americans, shall cease to influence some wiser and unborn generation.

The education of the clergy differed in little from that of laymen. Of theological learning there was none, nor did there exist the means of acquiring it. It is probable, that within the limits of the United States, there was not to be found a single copy of the works of the Fathers. But this mattered not. Protestantism is never very amenable to authority, and least of all when combined with democracy. Neither the pastors nor their flocks were inclined to attach much value to primitive authority, and from the solid rock of the Scriptures, each man was pleased to hew out his own religion, in such form and proportions as were suited to the measure of his taste and knowledge. It was considered enough that the clergy could read the Bible in their vernacular tongue, and expound its doctrines to the satisfaction of a congregation, not 356 more learned than themselves. To the present day, in one only of the colleges has any provision been made for clerical education. Many of the religious sects, however, have established theological academies,

in which candidates for the ministry may, doubtless, acquire such accomplishment as is deemed necessary for the satisfactory discharge of their high function.*

* The American Almanac for 1831 contains a list of all the theological establishments in the United States, with the number of students at each seminary, and of the volumes contained in its library. According to this document, the whole number of theological students is 657. The combined aggregate of volumes in possession of all the institutions is 43,450. The best furnished library in the list is that of the theological department of Yale College, which contains 8000 volumes. None of the others approach nearly to this amount. The institution of New Hampton possesses only 100 volumes, and is attended by fourteen students. Calculating each book to consist, on the average, of three volumes, the New Hampton library contains *thirty-three* works on theology. But this is not all. Seven of these establishments possess *no libraries at all,* so that the learning of the students must come by inspiration. Until the year 1808, no seminaries for religious instruction appear to have existed in the United States. One was founded in that year, another in 1812, but the great majority are of far more recent origin.

In short, the state of American society is such as to afford no leisure for any thing so unmarketable as abstract knowledge. For the pursuit of such studies, 357 it is necessary that the proficient should “fit audience find though few.” He must be able to calculate on sympathy at least, if not encouragement, and assuredly he would find neither in the United States.

Whatever were the defects of Jefferson, he seems to have been impressed with a deep consciousness of the deficiencies of his countrymen. He saw that the elements of knowledge were diffused everywhere, but that all its higher fruits were wanting. He endeavoured, not only to rouse his countrymen to a sense of their intellectual condition, but to provide the means by which it might be improved. With this view he founded a university in his native State, and his last worldly anxieties were devoted to its advancement. Jefferson felt strongly, that while philosophy and literature were excluded

from the fair objects of professional ambition, and the United States continued to be dependent for all advances in knowledge on importations from Europe, she was wanting in the noblest element of national greatness. Though the commerce of mind be regulated by loftier principles than more vulgar traffic, it should consist, unquestionably, of exchange of some kind. To receive, and 358 not to give, is to subsist on charity; to be a mute and changeling in the great family of nations.

The obstacles to success, however, were too great for the powers of Jefferson to overcome. In a community where the gradations of opulence constitute the great distinction between man and man, the pursuits which lead most readily to its attainment will certainly engross the whole volume of national talent. In England there are various coexistent aristocracies which act as mutual correctives, and by multiplying the objects of ambition, give amplitude and diffusion to its efforts. In America there exists but one, and the impulse it awakens is, of course, violent in proportion to its concentration. Jefferson, therefore, failed in this great object, towards the accomplishment of which his anxious efforts were directed. As a politician, he exercised a far greater influence over the national mind than any other statesman his country has produced. But in his endeavours to direct the intellectual impulses of his countrymen towards loftier objects, the very structure of society presented an insuperable barrier to success.

I am aware, it will be urged, that the state of 359 things I have described is merely transient, and that when population shall become more dense, and increased competition shall render commerce and agriculture less lucrative, the pursuits of science and literature will engross their due portion of the national talent. I hope it may be so, but yet it cannot be disguised, that there hitherto has been no visible approximation towards such a condition of society. In the present generation of Americans, I can detect no symptom of improving taste, or increasing elevation of intellect. On the contrary, the fact has been irresistibly forced on my conviction, that they are altogether inferior to those, whose place, in the course of nature, they are soon destined to occupy. Compared with their fathers, I have no hesitation in pronouncing the younger portion of the richer classes to be less liberal,

less enlightened, less observant of the proprieties of life, and certainly far less pleasing in manner and deportment.

In England every new generation starts forward into life with advantages far superior to its predecessor. Each successive crop—if I may so write—of legislators, is marked by increase of knowledge and 5 360 enlargement of, thought. The standard of acquirement necessary to attain distinction in public life, is now confessedly higher than it was thirty years ago. The intellectual currency of the country, instead of being depreciated, has advanced in value, while the issue has been prodigiously enlarged. True, there are no giants in our days, but this may be in part at least accounted for, by a general increase of stature in the people. We have gained at least an inch upon our fathers, and have the gratifying prospect of appearing diminutive when compared with our children.

But if this be so in America, I confess my observation is at fault. I can discern no prospect of her soon becoming a mental benefactor to the world. Elementary instruction, it is true, has generally kept pace with the rapid progress of population; but while the steps of youth are studiously directed to the base of the mountain of knowledge, no facilities have been provided for scaling its summit. There is at this moment nothing in the United States worthy of the name of a library. Not only is there an entire absence of learning, in the higher sense of the term, but an absolute want of the material from which alone learning 361 can be extracted. At present an American might study every book within the limits of the Union, and still be regarded in many parts of Europe—especially in Germany—as a man comparatively ignorant. And why does a great nation thus voluntarily continue in a state of intellectual destitution so anomalous and humiliating? There are libraries to be sold in Europe. Books might be imported in millions. Is it poverty, or is it ignorance of their value, that withholds America from the purchase?* I should be most happy to believe the former.

* The value of books imported from Europe during the year 1829-30 for public institutions, amounted only to 10,829 dollars! Even of this wretched sum, I am assured the greater

part was expended in works strictly new. Of the old treasures of learning, America seems content to remain destitute.

In regard to science, it is a fact scarcely credible, that the second maritime power in the world does not at the present moment possess a single astronomical observatory, and is dependent on France and England for the calculations of an ephemeris by which her ships may be enabled in tolerable safety to navigate the ocean!

In one point of view at least, the strong—and I fear not to say, the insuperable prejudice against the claims of primogeniture, is unfavourable to national advancement. It must continue to prevent any large VOL. I. 2 H 362 accumulations of individual wealth, and the formation of a class which might afford encouragement to those branches of science and literature, which cannot be expected from their very nature to become generally popular. Nor is it likely that the impediments to which I have alluded, will be at all diminished by the character of the government, on which I shall hazard a few observations.

When we speak of a government being popular or otherwise, we mean that it is more or less influenced by the prevailing currents of opinion and feeling in those subjected to its action. A highly popular government, therefore, can neither be in advance of the average intelligence of a people, nor can it lag behind it. It is, and must be, the mere reflex of the public mind in all its strength and weakness; the representative not only of its higher qualities and virtues, but of all the errors, follies, passions, prejudices, and ignorances by which it is debased.

It is in vain, therefore, to expect from such a government any separate and independent action. It cannot react upon, it is merely co-operative with, the people. It embodies no self-existent or countervailing 363 influence. It is only when it ceases to be expressly representative, and stands on a firmer basis than mere popular favour, that a government can acquire a positive and determinate character, and be recognised as an influence distinct from that of national opinion.

Neither in the American legislative or executive, is there any thing of this latter character discernible. The institutions of the United States afford the purest specimen the world has yet seen, of a representative government—of an executive, whose duties are those of mere passive agency—of a legislative, which serves but as the vocal organ of the sole and real dictator, the people. Into whatever speculations, therefore, we may be induced to enter, either with regard to the present condition or future prospects of the United States, it would be mere folly to attribute influence of any kind to a government, which, in truth, is nothing more than a mere recipient of popular impulse.

To an American of talent, there exist no objects to stimulate political ambition, save the higher offices of the federal government, or of the individual States. 364 The latter, indeed, are chiefly valued for the increased facilities they afford for the attainment of the former; but to either, the only passport is popular favour. Acquirements of any sort, therefore, which the great mass of the people do not value, or are incapable of appreciating, are of no practical advantage, for they bring with them neither fame, nor more substantial reward. But this is understating the case. Such knowledge, if displayed at all, would not merely be a dead letter in the qualifications of a candidate for political power, it would oppose a decided obstacle to his success. The sovereign people in America are given to be somewhat intolerant of acquirement, the immediate utility of which they cannot appreciate, but which they do feel has imparted something of mental superiority to its possessor. This is particularly the case with regard to literary accomplishment. The cry of the people is for “ *equal and universal education;* ” and attainments which circumstances have placed beyond their own reach, they would willingly discountenance in others.

It is true, indeed, that with regard to mere professional acquirements, a different feeling prevails. 365 The people have no objection to a clever surgeon or a learned physician, because they profit by their skill. An ingenious mechanic they respect. There is a fair field for a chemist or engineer. But in regard to literature, they can discover no practical benefit of which it is productive. In their eyes it is a mere appanage of aristocracy, and

whatever mental superiority it is felt to confer, is at the expense of the self-esteem of less educated men. I have myself heard in Congress the imputation of scholarship bandied as a reproach; and if the epithet “literary gentleman” may be considered as malignant, as its application did sometimes appear to be gratuitous, there assuredly existed ample apology for the indignant feeling it appeared to excite. The truth I take to be, that in their political representatives, the people demand just so much knowledge and accomplishment as they conceive to be practically available for the promotion of their own interests. This, in their opinion, is enough. More were but to gild refined gold, and paint the lily, operations which could add nothing to the value of the metal, or the fragrance of the flower.

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The consequence of all this has been, that the standard of judgment, in regard to public men, is decidedly lower in the United States than in most countries of Europe. It is perhaps natural, that the demand for political accomplishment should not precede its necessity, and I am far from wishing to assert, that American statesmen have not been hitherto found adequate to all the wants of the commonwealth. But if it be the great object of enlightened institutions to encourage the developement of the highest faculties, and, generally, to raise man in the scale of intellectual being—if knowledge be confessedly power, and freedom from prejudice a nobler enfranchisement than mere physical liberty, then I fear that, in reference to this great and ultimate function, those of the United States will be found wanting. I am far from arguing, that science and literature should be indebted for their promotion to a system of direct encouragement. Such policy is always dubious, and has rarely proved successful. But I certainly regard as one most important standard of excellence in a government, the degree in which, by *its very constitution,* it tends to call into 367 action the higher powers and qualities of the human mind. It is a poor policy, which, in matters of intellect, looks not beyond the necessities of the present hour. There is no economy so shortsighted, as that which would limit the expenditure of mind; and assuredly the condition of society cannot be desirable, in which great qualities of every sort do not find efficient excitement and ample field for display.

How far the influences, which have hitherto prevented the intellectual advancement of the Americans, may hereafter be counteracted by others more favourable to the cultivation of learning, I presume not to predict. There is certainly no deficiency of talent in the United States; no deficiency of men, stored even to abundance with knowledge, practically applicable to the palpable and grosser wants of their countrymen. But of those higher branches of acquirement, which profess not to minister to mere vulgar necessities, or to enlarge the sphere of physical enjoyment, and of which the only result is the elevation of the intellect, I fear it must be acknowledged she has not yet been taught even to appreciate the value.

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CHAPTER XI. PHILADELPHIA.

The United States' hotel, where I had taken up my abode, was a favourite resort of American naval officers. An opportunity was thus afforded me of forming acquaintance with several, to whom I was indebted for many kind and most obliging attentions. It must be confessed, that these republicans have carried with them their full share of “Old Albion's spirit of the sea,” for better sailors, in the best and highest acceptation of the term, I do not believe the world can produce. During the course of my tour, I had a good deal of intercourse with the members of this profession; and I must say, that in an officer of the United States' navy, I have uniformly found, not only a well-informed gentleman, but a person on 369 whose kindness and good offices to a stranger, I might with confidence rely. They betray nothing of that silly spirit of bluster and bravado, so prevalent among other classes of their countrymen; and even in conversing on the events of the late war, they spoke of their successes in a tone of modesty which tended to raise even the high impression I had already received of their gallantry.

In company with one of these gentlemen I visited the Navy Yard, and went over a splendid line-of-battle ship, the Pennsylvania. She is destined to carry a hundred and forty-four guns; and is certainly one of the largest ships in the world. I likewise inspected a

magnificent frigate called the Raritan. Both these vessels are on the stocks, but I was assured that a couple of months would suffice at any time to make them ready for sea. They are completely covered in from the weather; and every aperture of the wood is carefully filled with sea-salt to prevent decay. Great faith is placed in the efficacy of this preservative.

Messrs Carey and Lea are the chief booksellers of Philadelphia, and I believe, of the Union. Their 370 establishment is very extensive, and they are evidently men of much sagacity and enterprise. The principal part of their business consists in issuing reprints of English works, which, either from their merit or their notoriety, may be expected to have a considerable circulation on this side of the water. Of original publications the number is comparatively small; though, I am told, of late years it has considerably increased.

The three great publishing cities of the Union are Boston, New York, and Philadelphia. From the first and last of these places I have seen some very respectable specimens of typography; but, in general, the reprints of English works are executed in the coarsest and most careless manner. It is quite a mistake to suppose that books are cheaper in the United States than in England. If there were no copyright, and the British public would be content to read books printed in the most wretched manner on whitey-brown paper, there can be no doubt that the English bibliopole would beat his American brother out of the field. A proof of this is, that the British editions of works of which the copyright has expired, 371 are quite as cheap, and much superior in execution, to those produced in this country.

Copyright in the United States is not enjoyable by a foreigner, though an American can hold it in England. The consequence is, that an English author derives no benefit from the republication of his work in America, while every Englishman who purchases the work of an American, is taxed in order to put money in the pocket of the latter. There is no reciprocity in this; and it is really not easy to see why Mr Washington Irving or Mr Cooper should enjoy greater privileges in this country than are accorded to Mr Bulwer or Mr Theodore Hook in the United States. There is an old proverb, “What is good for

the goose is good for the gander," which will be found quite as applicable to the policy of Parliament as the practice of the poultry-yard. It is to be hoped this homely apophthegm will not escape the notice of the Government, and that by an act of signal justice, (the abolition of American copyright in England,) it will compel the United States to adopt a wiser and more liberal system.

All novels, good, bad, and indifferent, which 372 appear in England, seem to be reprinted in this country. Indeed the American appetite in this respect is apparently quite as indiscriminate as our own. A good deal also of the more valuable British literature issues from the Philadelphia press, but in the most democratic form. I have been sometimes amused at observing the entire transmogrification undergone by one of Mr Murray's hot-pressed and broad-margined volumes under the hands of an American bookseller. It enters his shop a three guinea quarto; it comes out a four and twopenny duodecimo. The metamorphosis reminds one of a lord changing clothes with a beggar. The man is the same, but he certainly owes nothing to the toilet.

The Americans are as jealous on the subject of their literature as on other matters of national pretension. The continual importation of European books contributes to excite a consciousness of inferiority which is by no means pleasant. There are many projects afloat for getting rid of this mental bondage, and establishing intellectual independence. By one party it is proposed to exclude English works altogether, and forbid their republication under a high 373 penalty. "Americans," say the advocates of this system, "will never write books when they can be had so cheaply from England. Native talent is kept under; it wants protection against the competition of foreign genius. Give it the monopoly of the home market; deal with intellect as you do with calico and broad-cloth, and do not prematurely force our literary labourers into a contest with men enjoying the advantages of larger libraries, learning, and leisure." In short, what these gentlemen want is, that ignorance and barbarism should be established by legislative enactment, a policy which, till America has

suffered more than she has yet done from the inroads of knowledge, will probably strike a foreigner as somewhat gratuitous.

If the American legislature, however, has not done this, it has certainly done what is something akin to it. A duty of thirty cents, or about fifteen pence a-pound, is charged on all imported books, which, in every point of view, is highly injudicious. In the first place, American books require no protection, because the expense of copyright, and of transport, is far more than enough to secure to native booksellers 374 the undisturbed possession of their own market. When a book is of a character to lead to republication in the United States, of course the only effect of the duty is to force those, who might wish for handsomer and better copies, to furnish their libraries with inferior material. The number of these, however, would be found very small. In this country, when a book is once read, it is cast aside and thought of no more. In comparatively few instances, is it bound and consigned to the shelves of the book-case, and therefore it is, that the purchasers of books almost uniformly prefer the very cheapest form. The injurious effect, however, of the duty on imported works, is felt with regard to those which, although valuable, are not of a character to repay the cost of republication. The duty in all such cases acts not as a protection—for when the book is not reprinted there is nothing to protect—but as *a tax upon knowledge;* or, in other words, a premium for the perpetuation of ignorance.

During my stay at Philadelphia, I frequently visited the courts of law. The proceedings I happened to witness were in nothing remarkable, and I 375 have already described the externals of an American Court. It is not unusual among the lower orders in England, when any knotty point is proposed for discussion, to say it would “puzzle a Philadelphia lawyer.” To do this, however, it must be knotty indeed, for I have never met a body of men more distinguished by acuteness and extensive professional information than the members of the Philadelphia bar.

In the American courts there is much tacit respect paid to English decisions, each volume of which is reprinted in this country as soon as it appears. Indeed, but for these, law in

America would soon become an inextricable jumble. It is impossible to expect much harmony of decision from twenty-four independent tribunals, unless there exist some common land-marks to serve as guides to opinion. Even as it is, the most anomalous discrepancies occur between the decisions of the different State Courts; but without a constant influx of English authorities, the laws regarding property would be speedily overcast by such a mass of contradictory precedents as to be utterly irrevocable to any system.

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The low salaries of the judges constitute matter of general complaint among the members of the bar, both at Philadelphia and New York. These are so inadequate, when compared with the income of a well-employed barrister, that the State is deprived of the advantage of having the highest legal talent on the bench. Men from the lower walks of the profession, therefore, are generally promoted to the office, and for the sake of a wretched saving of a few thousand dollars, the public are content to submit their lives and properties to the decision of men of inferior intelligence and learning.

In one respect, I am told the very excess of democracy defeats itself. In some States the judges are so inordinately underpaid, that no lawyer, who does not possess a considerable private fortune, can afford to accept the office. From this circumstance something of aristocratic distinction has become connected with it, and a seat on the bench is now more greedily coveted than it would be, were the salary more commensurate with the duties of the situation.

All lawyers with whom I have conversed agree, that the discrepancy between the laws of the different I 377 States is productive of much injury. The statutes of one State are often defeated in the tribunals of another, when not in accordance with the tone of public opinion in the latter. A laxity thus arises in the administration of municipal law incompatible with good government. The criminal codes are likewise highly discordant, and from the variety of jurisdictions, the probability of crime being followed by punishment is much

diminished. When a man guilty of an offence in one State escapes into another, he can only be apprehended on the formal demand of the executive authority of the State having jurisdiction of the crime. Before the necessary machinery, however, can be set at work, he has generally time and opportunity for a second evasion, and it thus often happens that the ends of justice are entirely defeated.

There can be no doubt that the want of uniformity in the administration of justice, is injurious both to public morals and private security. But the evil is one naturally arising from the political subdivisions of the Union, and for which, with the jealousy which VOL. I. 2 I 378 prevails of the jurisdiction of the federal government, it is perhaps impossible to devise a remedy. With so many co-existent and independent legislatures, uniformity of legislation is impossible, and we can only hope that in the growing political experience of American statesmen, the evil may be diminished, though there exist no prospect of its being entirely removed.

Philadelphia may be called the Bath of the United States, and many individuals who have amassed fortunes in other parts of the Union, select it as the place of their residence. Money-getting is not here the furious and absorbing pursuit of all ranks and conditions of men. On the contrary, every thing goes on quietly. The people seem to dabble in business, rather than follow it with that impetuous energy observable in other cities. The truth is, that a large portion of the capital of the Philadelphians is invested in New York, where there is ample field for its profitable employment. The extent of their own traffic is limited, and in this respect I should imagine it to be inferior even to Boston. But, in point of opulence, Philadelphia is undoubtedly the 379 first city of the Union. It is the great focus of American capital, the pecuniary reservoir which fills the various channels of profitable enterprise.

In Philadelphia it is the fashion to be scientific, and the young ladies occasionally display the *bas bleu* , in a degree, which in other cities would be considered rather alarming. I remember at a dinner party, being instructed as to the component parts of the atmosphere by a fair spinster, who anticipated the approach of a period when oxygen would supersede

champagne, and young gentlemen and ladies would hob or nob in gas. The vulgar term *drunk* would then give place to *inflated* , certainly more euphonious to ears polite, and the coarser stimulants, such as alcohol and tobacco, in all their forms and uses, be regarded with contempt.

There is no American city in which the system of *exclusion* is so rigidly observed as in Philadelphia. The ascent of a *parvenu* into the aristocratic circle is slow and difficult. There is a sort of holy alliance between its members to forbid all unauthorized approach. Claims are canvassed, and pretensions weighed; manners, fortune, tastes, habits, and descent, undergo a 380 rigid examination; and from the temper of the judges, the chances are, that the final oscillation of the scale is unfavourable to the reception of the candidate. I remember being present at a party, of which the younger members expressed a strong desire to enliven the dulness of the city, by getting up a series of public balls. The practicability of this project became matter of general discussion, and it was at length given up, simply because there were many families confessedly so respectable as to afford no tangible ground for exclusion, and yet so unfashionable as to render their admission a nuisance of the first magnitude.

I have already alluded to the existence of this aristocratic feeling in New York, but it certainly is there far less prevalent than in Philadelphia. This may easily be accounted for. In the former city, the vicissitudes of trade, the growth and dissipation of opulence, are far more rapid. Rich men spring up like mushrooms. Fortunes are made and lost by a single speculation. A man may go to bed at night worth less than nothing, and pull off his nightcap in the morning with some hundred thousand dollars 381 waiting his acceptance. There is comparatively no settled and permanent body of leading capitalists, and consequently less room for that sort of defensive league which naturally takes place among men of common interests and position in society.

In Philadelphia, on the other hand, the pursuits of commerce are confined within narrower limits. There is no field for speculation on a great scale, and the regular trade of the place

is engrossed by old established houses, which enjoy a sort of prescriptive confidence, against which younger establishments, however respectable, find it in vain to contend. The keener, and more enterprising traders, therefore, generally remove to New York, and Philadelphia continues comparatively untroubled by those fluctuations of wealth, which impede any permanent and effective union among its aristocracy.

In society in Philadelphia, I had the good fortune to meet the Count de Survilliers, better known by the untitled name of Joseph Bonaparte. This personage has purchased an estate in the neighbourhood, and by his simplicity and benevolence of character, has succeeded in winning golden opinions from all 382 classes of Americans. He often visits Philadelphia, and mingles a good deal in the society of the place. In the party where I first met him, a considerable time elapsed before I was aware of the presence of a person so remarkable. He was at length pointed out to my observation, with an offer of introduction which I thought proper to decline; being aware, that in a work with which he was probably unacquainted, I had spoken of him in a manner, which, whether just or otherwise, made it indelicate that I should be obtruded on his notice.

Joseph Bonaparte, in person, is about the middle height, but round and corpulent. In the form of his head and features there certainly exists a resemblance to Napoleon, but in the expression of the countenance there is none. I remember, at the Pergola theatre of Florence, discovering Louis Bonaparte from his likeness to the Emperor, which is very striking, but I am by no means confident that I should have been equally successful with Joseph. There is nothing about him indicative of high intellect. His eye is dull and heavy; his manner ungraceful, and deficient in that ease and dignity which we vulgar people are 383 apt to number among the necessary attributes of majesty. But Joseph was not bred to kingcraft, and seems to have been forced into it rather as a sort of political stop gap, than from any particular aptitude or inclination for the duties of sovereignty. I am told he converses without any appearance of reserve on the circumstances of his short and troubled reign—if reign, indeed, it can be called—in Spain. He attributes more than half his misfortunes to the jealousies and intrigues of the unruly marshals, over whom he could

exercise no authority. He admits the full extent of his unpopularity, but claims credit for a sincere desire to benefit the people.

One circumstance connected with his deportment I particularly remember. The apartment was warm, and the ex-king evidently felt it so; for taking out his pocket-handkerchief, he deliberately mopped his bald “discrowned head,” with a hand which one would certainly have guessed to have had more connexion with a spit than a sceptre.

I remained a fortnight waiting for a change of weather, but it never came. The roads, however, had become quite practicable for travelling, and I at 384 length determined on departure. At five o'clock in the morning I accordingly drove to Market Street, where I took possession of a place in a sleigh shaped like an omnibus, which contained accommodation for about as many passengers. The snow lay deep on the ground, and the weather was cold in the extreme. After some delay the vehicle got into motion, and when we reached the Schuylkill, which is crossed by a wooden bridge of very curious mechanism, I looked back on the Quaker city, yet glimmering in the distance, and bade farewell to it for ever.

END OF VOLUME ONE.

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